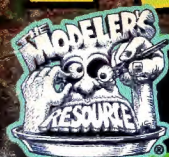


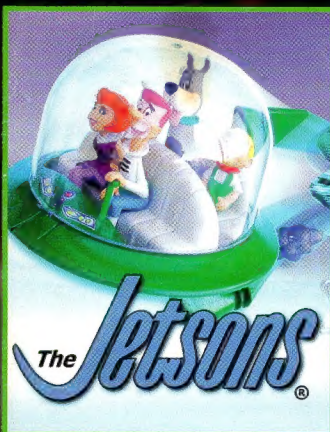
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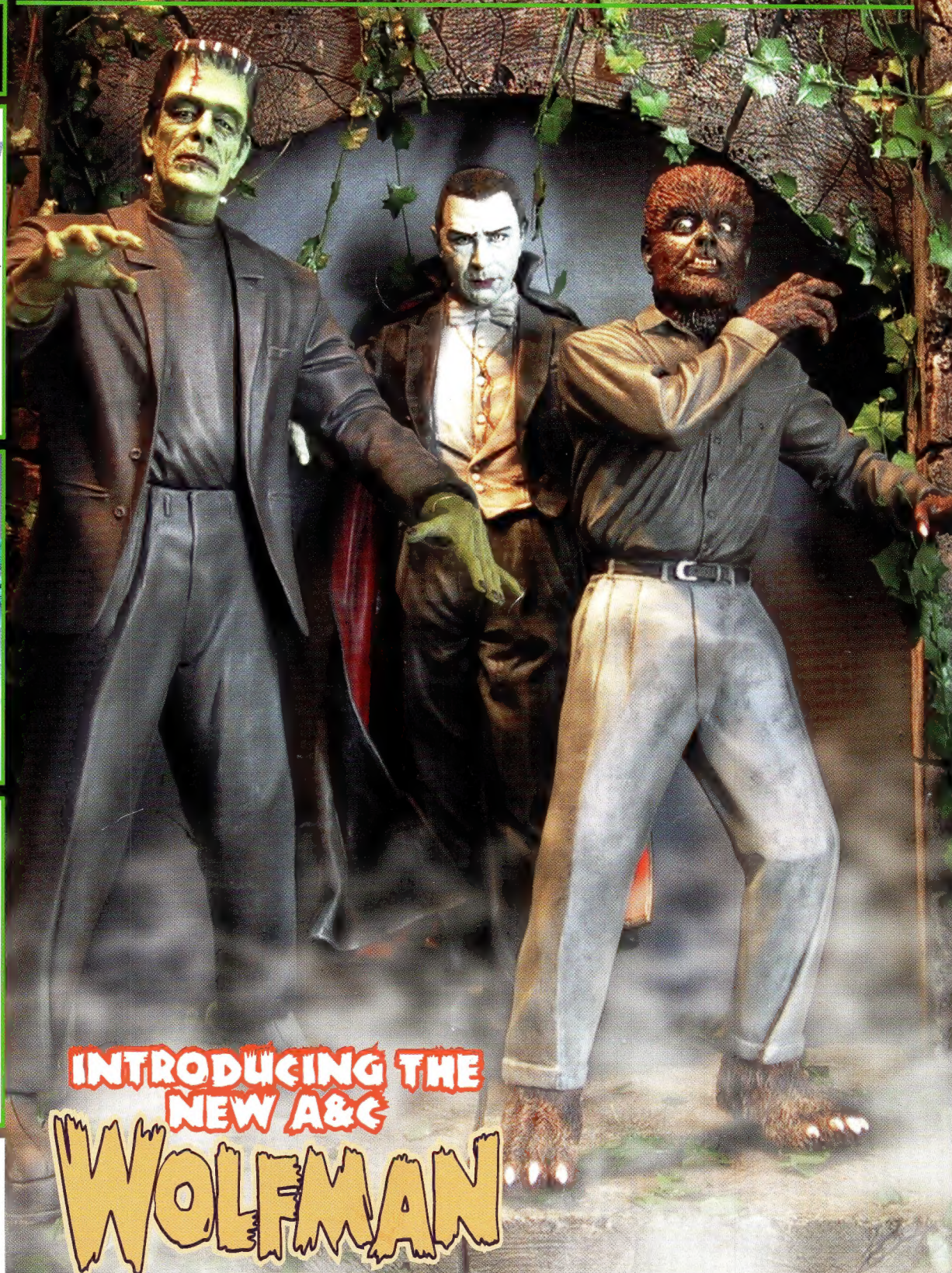
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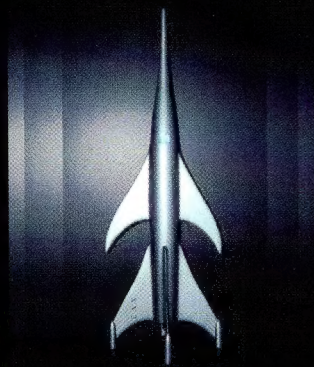


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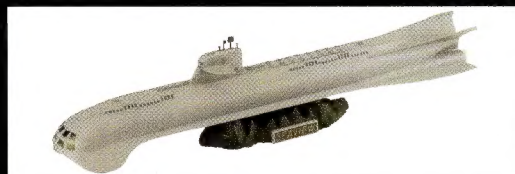
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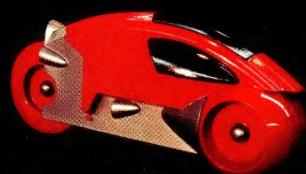
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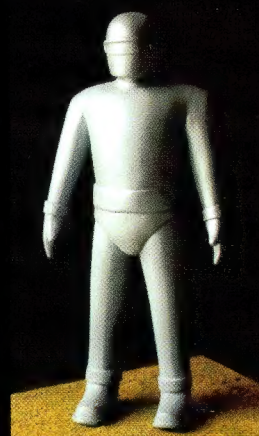
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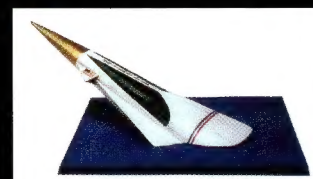
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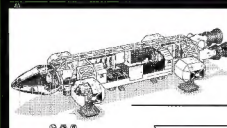
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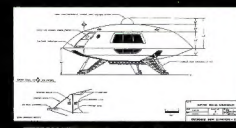
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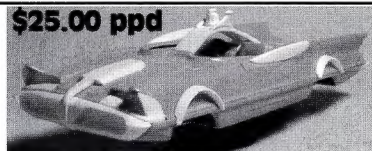
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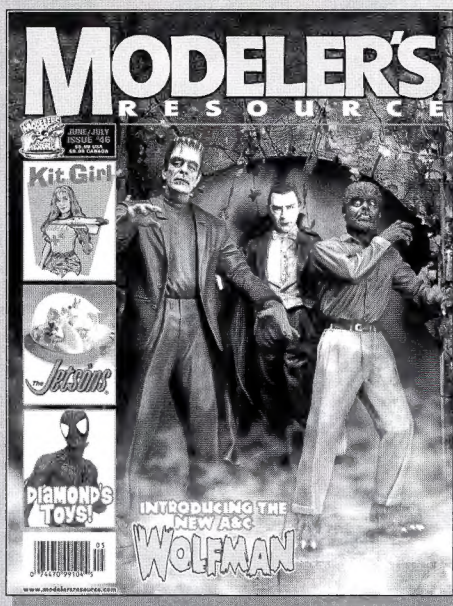
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12

Ahh-ooooo!

Bill goes in for a bit of howling at the moon with a new one from Monsters in Motion.

Boxed pictures:

Kit Girl (Jim Key);
The Jetsons' Spacemobile (Fred DeRuvo),
Spiderman Bust (Diamond Comics).

Main cover photo: Bill Craft

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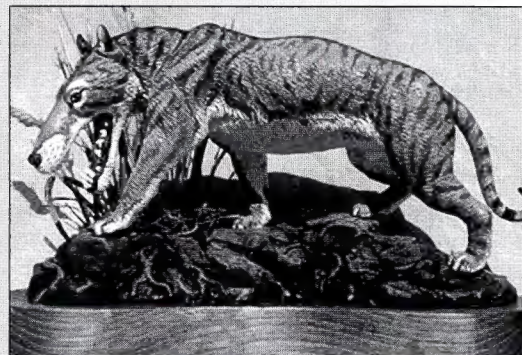
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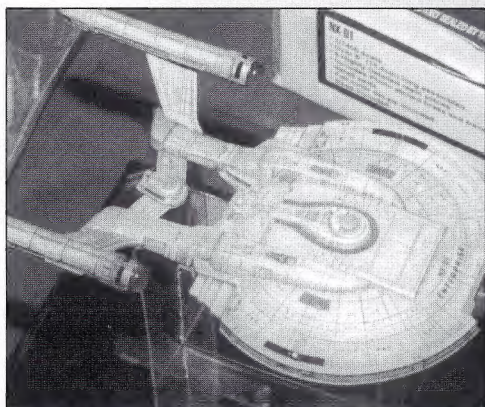
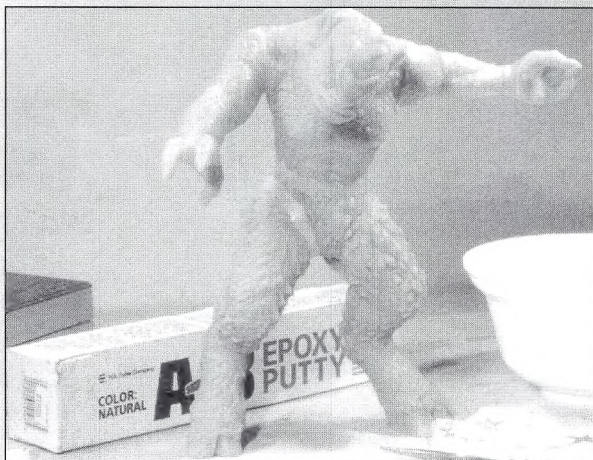
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Don't Be A Modeling Snob...

N

ot long ago at a hobby shop, I was listening to two modelers discuss the subject of figure kits. One was plainly disgusted with the idea that people would actually waste their time modeling figure DOLLS! They were absolute pansies, he stated. He offered "proof" to

his friend that figure kits were essentially toys, not viable at all if you considered yourself to be a real modeler. His proof consisted of the fact that most major modeling companies didn't produce figures at all, the few that did quickly got out of it because sales simply weren't there. People who modeled figure kits were not true modelers because they lived in a fantasy realm because unlike cars, most figure models were based on characters that do not exist except in comic books.

Certainly he was right when he said that figure kits did not occupy the lion's share of the modeling market and it was also true that the few mainline modeling companies that did venture into that area seemed to quickly pull themselves out due to poor sales and outrageous licensing fees. But, did all of this mean that those who modeled figure kits were, what did he say...pansies? Sheesh, gimme a break! How untrue is that? Sure, there might be a few "pansies" here and there, but I'm sure the car modelers have their share of "pansies" as well as do the Sci-Fi folk.

After a few minutes of listening to his rant, I started to see some real homegrown humor in what he was saying. His conversation was becoming extremely funny to me. In fact, if I kept listening to him, I would most likely burst out with an honest to goodness guffaw and when you feel a guffaw coming on, it's probably best to be by yourself or risk startling innocent bystanders!

After I quieted my insides a bit, I asked myself, "Is this guy unique? Is he the only one who has visions of grandeur when it came to his version of modeling?" The answer to that was just too darn easy to arrive at. I thought back over all the years we've been involved in modeling, all the shows I've ever attended, all the folks I've ever met and all the discussions I've ever been involved in with respect to modeling and I came to the only possible conclusion that's out there. Most of us, to some degree or another, are modeling snobs. Most of us don't mean to be while some wield it like a sword.

I have heard car modelers badmouth figure modelers. I have heard figure modelers badmouth car modelers. I have heard real space modelers badmouth Sci-Fi modelers and I have heard military modelers badmouth EVERYBODY else. The funniest part of all of this? Modeling is a HOBBY! It's not life for goodness sake (and I'm certainly glad that salvation doesn't hinge upon which branch of modeling I enjoy or even the fact that I'm a modeler at all!). It's not death and it's by no means a career for most of us. It's a hobby. Think about it for a minute, who CARES what someone else models or how they model?!



Who gives a rip?! Why should that matter to you or me or anyone?! It shouldn't, but it does. Too many of us are just too quick to point out what we consider to be the "lowly estate" of the "other" guy and his modeling endeavors.

According to the Collegiate Dictionary, the word "hobby" means: *a pursuit outside one's regular occupation engaged in especially for relaxation.* Yet, in spite of that definition, there exists all kinds of angst in this hobby and it is pitiful. Are we relaxed yet? If not, why not? If not, when are we supposed to get there?

Okay, so ask yourself (if you dare), what about other modeling genres do you find unacceptable and why? Do you hate to watch someone build and paint a car model? Do you thoroughly dislike watching that figure modeler "play with dolls"? Can you not stand the sight of some "modeler" putting together the latest spaceship from some fantasy-based Sci-Fi TV show? Well, why the heck not? They're not asking you to join them? They're not forcing you to do it. In fact, they're not even asking or expecting you to like it. What they're expecting is that you respect the fact that this is how they like their modeling.

I am comfortable at a huge IPMS convention where most of the entries in the contest are military, or at a figure show where figures are in the spotlight, or at a show like WonderFest™ where you'll likely see every imaginable type of model in just about every category. I'm not into military myself. I don't build cars and trucks or planes straight out of the box, but I'm certainly willing to let those who do, do so in peace and respect the ability it takes to build those types of models.

Modeling has many genres and allows for all types of creative thought and achievement. There is truly enough for everyone, so let's let everyone enjoy their own and appreciate and celebrate the differences together. If you can't do that, then I guess you lose out and so does the industry.

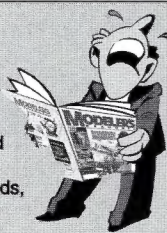
Enjoy this issue and we'll see you promptly, the first week of July.

Fred

Ah! We Goofed!

• In last issue's "Coming at You!" section, page 44, we listed the wrong address information for the N & T Productions' Joker kit shown. They also have a semi-nude The Naked Cat based on Catwoman as she removes her costume (she stands approx. 11 inches tall and retails for £80 (approx. \$112) PAINTED or £50 (approx. \$70) as a KIT.

The contact information for them is: N & T Productions, 19 Marina Dr, South Shields, Tyne & Wear NE33 2NH England Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 191 4563741 www.nt-productions.com



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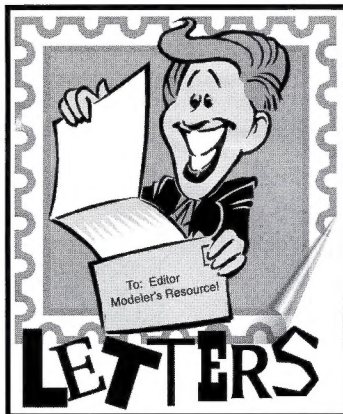
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"Unique and Best"

Dear Fred,

I just finished reading issue 44 and I wanted to tell you that I think this is your best issue yet, that I have read anyway.

The two articles on sculpting particularly point out what I think is unique and best about your magazine. I love this kind of stuff and it is just not covered much in other publications.

The article about the Superman® models also was a highlight for me. My very first model as a small boy was Aurora's Superman. My mom built and painted it for me. I can still see her at the kitchen table dabbing on glossy paints. The model, of course, is long gone and Mom is too, but I have always remembered that for some reason.

Thanks for a great magazine and keep more like this one coming and I'll keep reading.

Sincerely, Bob Davis (E-mail)

- Thanks Bob. Nice of you to say. That is a cool memory of your mother. Like mine, it sounds like yours was a very positive influence on your life. Both Jim Groman's and Alex Kriefeldt's sculpting articles were great. We'll have more from Alex and I'd love to have more from Jim as well.

"Where Can I Find That Book?"

Fred:

In reference to the "On the Shelf" article in the August/September 2001 issue featuring the *Nightmares in Plastic* book, I would like to know where on Earth to purchase it? I've been to numerous comic bookstores, Borders and Barnes and Noble and had no luck locating it. I really want this book, however, no one out on this rock seems to know about it. The ladies in the bookstores had given me other numbers to call, but once again, no luck. I'm very frustrated and want the book. If possible, do you have a copy handy I could purchase? If not, do you have any phone numbers for these Diamond Comic book stores, or at least an address? Please help me if you can.

Also, were you ever able to locate Nick Infield to do an article about that great Frankenstein diorama we spoke of? I would love to see a whole, complete article based on Nick (one of the most gifted modelers we have).

I am looking forward to your response on both of these matters. By the way, I really love *Modeler's Resource* magazine, can't you tell? Keep up the great work; your magazine really is "cream of the crop." Thanks for being

there as a great modeling resource. You're a diamond in the rough.

John D. Dutze, Honolulu, HI

- John, your compliments are tremendously appreciated. I have good news. Give *Creature Features* a call to get your hands on that book. You can reach them in Burbank, CA at 818.842.9383. They just began stocking it a short while ago.

As far as Nick goes, I agree with you, but I've had no luck contacting him. Nick? If you're reading this, give me a call, will you?

Readers, please note that for this next letter, our comments are interspersed throughout in bold and italic type. The writer's text is in plain type.

"World and Hobby is Getting Weird"

Hi Fred,

The world and our hobby are getting weird! But let's deal with the hobby!! Let's start with your magazine for February issue...YEGADS!! Woodland Scenics actually **sells** a bag of twigs???? I can see the use if you live in an area full of drive-by shootings that you can't leave the house to look for them, but really, is there a need for this product? No 7 of 9 models...yet **we get twigs?**

- Yeah, but Ed, these aren't just any twigs. They're Woodland Scenics' twigs and that means quality you can count on! Mother Nature may have created them, but the folks at Woodland Scenics went out and gathered so that you didn't have to. Plus, there were no licensing fees needing to be paid to Mother Nature for the twigs, unlike a 7 of 9 model.

Then Godzilla®...another nice kit, but the tank...what is it? It has the turret of an M-47 Patton...and the body of a Mk.IV German tank. Skyhook Models had a nice Day the Earth Stood Still diorama, with a Russian 7-34 tank guarding it. In Washington?

- Ed, the tank in the Godzilla kit is a toy tank. It's made for city streets and has a hemi, super-charged 289 slant six in it.

Then we have convention coverage. More models please! Who (besides them) wants to see the winners or model representatives? If you have to show people, MORE females please!

- Ed, we publish the pictures that we get with an article if we accept it for publication. Convention/show coverage varies from issue to issue. Sometimes, we'll show more product; other times we'll show more people. It all depends on which side of the coin lands up that particular day and how much chocolate I've eaten before I begin the layout.

Six whole pages of LORD of the RINGS? Has MR become a movie magazine? I want to see MODELS, NOT movie producers in shorts. If it's a Bond, Star Trek or Terminator movie, maybe...if PROPS are shown! Stargate or Earth Final Conflict, okay, but six pages on a movie, which can't hold a candle to the Mummy series of films is a waste of paper! BUT, you are not alone. FSM has an article on a guy who models a Sherman tank with airbrush stencils and brass headlight guards and he covers all his work with sandbags!!

- Ed, Ed, Ed, ts, ts, ts. If I hadn't ever

talked with you on the phone at least 10 times in the past year, I'd think you were being serious. Surely, you jest, Ed. We really wanted to do a story on LOTR and New Line was extremely picky about the pictures that they were willing to release to anyone, not just us. We wanted to delve deeply into the creation of the miniatures, etc., but had little luck in obtaining those particular shots. Is MR turning into a movie magazine? No, but we've had "Down the Pipeline" and "Behind the Curtain" in the mag for a number of years. Hollywood is what gave birth to the figure end of the industry. It's where the roots of the industry are connected and it's always fun for me to find out more about it. You can't be serious with your comments about LOTR! Like millions of others, I'm anxiously awaiting the second and third installment. Tolkien's LOTR trilogy is a classic by any definition and it's my opinion (shared by many) that the movie does a wonderful job in bringing Tolkien's work to the screen. I think they did a brilliant job on it and my hat's off to Peter Jackson, shorts and all!

Then I get a VLS book on painting figures and the author states it takes a half hour to paint his figures' boots!!

- Ed, do I really need to comment on that or were you simply presenting what you feel is a rhetorical statement?

Then we have the occasional commercial from Bandai on their at least twenty-five year old GUNDAM series of kits in which modelers state, "It takes many hours and days to build one!"

- Ed, I'm not sharing your pessimism here. Those commercials are pretty dang cool. By the way, what's your level of commitment?

Finally, a review in FSM on a tank having close to 600 parts...but NO CREW??!! Same with Polar Lights' C-57D saucer, a great kit, but in my calling them, no crew is planned to be made!! No cannons or force field fence? Ye gads!

- So, you're upset that these kits don't have crews? Do you think that by the time you put together a tank with 600 parts, you'd care if it has a crew or not? Just curious, Ed.

For Christmas, I was GIVEN a computer, (being the ONLY white male does have advantages on my block!). So, I took it back to the store, got loot and visited that hobby shop I once mentioned and got almost everything I needed! Happy modeling as long as you can!

Ed Wojcik, Detroit, MI

- I'm not sure what your race and sex has to do with a computer, but you took it back, Ed? Well, I'm disappointed because now we can't e-mail each other! In all seriousness, Ed, I hope you know I'm kidding with you. Personally, I think we have a good deal to be thankful for as modelers, but then again, it all goes back to what each modeler expects and wants from the industry. I'm happy. I've got enough models in my garage alone to take me through to the next millennium. I derive a good deal of pleasure from the particular models that I build and paint. I love what I do for a living (this magazine), I've made some phe-

nomenal friendships, I've got a gorgeous and loving wife, two wonderful kids, I live in a beautiful part of the country and things are just spiffy. So, Ed, if I may be so bold, sit back, grab a model that you've been wanting to build and have fun! As my dad use to say, "Don't make me come over there."

"Pleased About GenCon Coverage"

Dear Fred,

Aha, a new e-mail address! That explains why I couldn't get this to go through earlier!

For starters, let me say that my husband and I really enjoy our subscription to *Modeler's Resource* (both the articles and the ads). You and Silvia are producing a really top-notch publication (judging from the letters column, you must already know that). I was particularly pleased to note your coverage of GENCON in issue 44. I have been a sculptor in the gaming miniatures industry for over ten years, creating well over 1,000 figures for various companies during that time. I attend GENCON every year, but usually spend all my time helping and doing sculpting demonstrations at some of my clients' booths. If you get another chance to attend in the future (GENCON is moving to Indianapolis for the next few years) and would like a quick tour of the dealers' room, please let me know and I'd be glad to show you around.

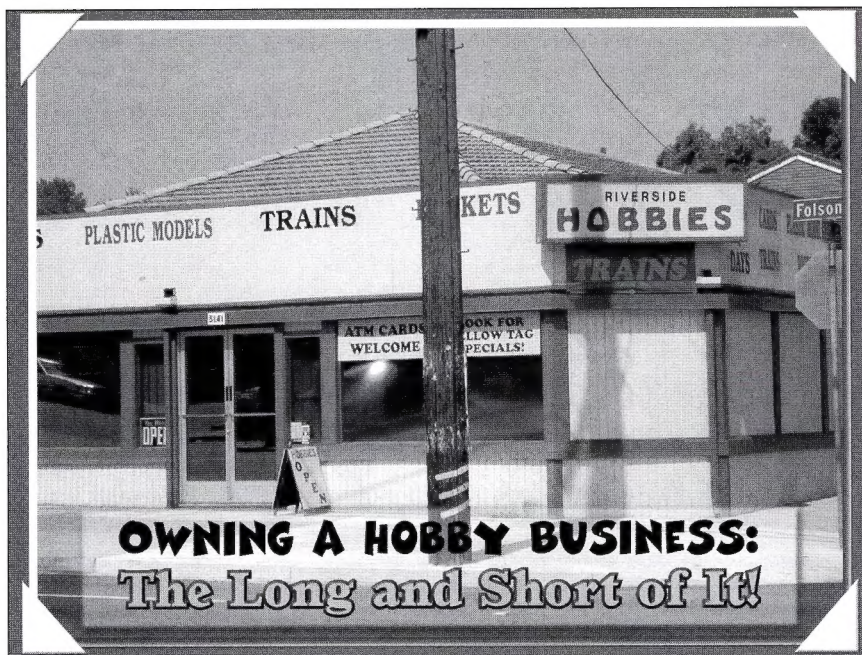
Your observation that young gamers are willing to invest significant time, effort, and money into this hobby is quite accurate. I suspect that it may have something to do with the facts that (1) the figures are made to be used, not just displayed (although some people do simply paint and collect them) and (2) gamers have usually invested a lot of thought and emotion into the characters they play, so they can easily "identify with" these figures as facets of their own personalities. If the model industry can find some way to integrate factors like these into their products, it might help generate increased interest among young people. Maybe one of the model companies could get in touch with some of the companies that produce gaming miniatures and work out licensing to create larger-scale versions of some of their best-selling figures. Aside from some gamers who build and use (small-scale) model vehicles in their campaigns, I don't know of many in the gaming hobby that currently try to build and paint many non-gaming model kits. On the other hand, I do know of many modelers who incorporate gaming figures into their dioramas, so it seems (to me) that the flow between the two groups is mostly one-way at this time.

Sincerely, Sandy (E-mail)

- It was nice to hear from you, particularly regarding your observations about the gaming industry. Thanks also for the compliments on the magazine. Sounds like you're quite busy with sculpting and whatnot! That is exciting.

Thanks again, Sandy and maybe my wife and I will run into you at the next GenCon.





Below: Lorraine and Doug, owners of Riverside Hobbies since the late '70s.



- We recently sat down with Doug and Lorraine, owners of Riverside Hobbies, who have been in the hobby business for nearly 23 years to hear what they had to say about the hobby, the industry, the changes and everything else.

MR: How long have you been involved in owning and/or operating a hobby business?

Well, when we started, we were a Mom & Pop operation and now we are a Grandma and Grandpa operation. That amounts to 23 years in the business. I previously owned a gasoline service station for 8 years and in those days, it was a service station. We washed windows, checked fluid levels, tire pressure, etc. I got tired of the long hours, many 17 hours days, so I took some time off and scouted around for a new type of business.

MR: What was the deciding factor that made you want to get into the hobby as a business?

I had been a modeler since I was a kid in the early 50s when the first plastic kits were mostly wood, and then came the Highway Pioneers in all plastic. I used to model as an adult also. I would sit up at night in front of the TV and build into the wee hours. So, I decided to get into the hobby business.

I looked around Sacramento and decided that the south area needed a hobby shop, because the only shop in that area had closed. I opened on Stockton Blvd in 1978 and named the store Doug's Hobbies and Things. What a mistake! I got calls for everything imaginable (stuffed buzzards, rubber chickens, "what kind of things do you carry?" and the list goes on)! I spent several months getting the store ready and trusted a salesman who knew less about the business than I did to put in my initial stock. He sent me cases of

1/8th and 1/12th kits and a lot of other high-ticket items so his commission check would add up fast. He also put in a little of everything he carried and many of the categories didn't sell. That taught me a fast lesson and I have done all the ordering since. This first location was a disaster (by now, my wife was running the store because I had gotten another service station so we could eat!). So, after 9 months, we decided to relocate and I bought my way out of the lease.

We moved the store to Florin Rd and Riverside Blvd after about a year and got out of the service station business and changed the name to Riverside Hobbies (another lesson learned - never name your store after a street. You may move to another street. We were lucky because in Sacramento, you are always by the river side so it wasn't a problem for us when we made our other moves that I mention later). We decided to concentrate mainly on models, HO and N Trains, rockets, games and figures. We dropped crafts and remote control items after we moved to our new location. We stayed in that location for 5 years. It was too small and, as usual, at the end of the lease the rent was going to go up a considerable amount, so we decided to pack up the goods and move.

We moved to a larger location at The Courtyard on Freeport Blvd. We started carrying collector cards and remote control cars at that location. Our oldest son did a lot of repair and building for those who needed help with them. This was a nice location because of the large covered area inside and we were able to hold model contests. The center was sold to a new owner and he decided to remodel it causing many disruptions, such as adding an escalator right in front of our entrance essentially blocking us from view and taking months to install. So, we opted to move and

since the new owner had broken the lease, we were able to move after four years.

We moved to a larger location in the Lanai Center next to the library. What a fun move it was because it was just across the street! I was able to move paint racks with a dolly as soon as I could build up the courage to make a mad dash across Freeport Blvd. Even in the crosswalk with a load of items, people wouldn't stop, so you had to run (I could do that in those days!). We had a good five years there, but along with the library and several other tenants in the center, we decided to move again. The landlord was also going to raise the rent a considerable amount, as they seem to think you have too much merchandise to move. A little work has never been a problem for me, so we packed up our stock and were off to a new location!

This time, we moved to a larger, more centralized location on Folsom Blvd in East Sacramento. We dropped the remote control cars (our son, who had been doing the work on them went to another job and our daughter was working in his place but wasn't into fixing RC cards) and we also dropped games and figures. Sales had dropped a great deal with the advent of the computer. This gave us more room for models and trains. We've been at this location for almost 10 years and like it here.

MR: Having been in the hobby for 23 years, what have been some of the major changes that have directly affected you, either in a negative or positive way?

Over the years there have been lots of changes for us besides the moves. Cost is one thing. An average model made in the USA was \$3.00 to \$4.00 back in 1978. Testors' paint was \$.29 and there wasn't much paint to choose from when we started - Testors and Pactra were it. There was no Testors Model Master, Tamiya or Gunze. Not all kits were in boxes either. Some were carded or in bags. There were not a lot of after-market products available then,

and now there are all kinds of custom and detail items available. Finding wholesalers has been tough because so many have gone out of business and many are direct competitors. Wholesalers should sell to businesses only. That's why they're called "wholesalers." Over the years, those that compete with us get far less of our dollars than if they had simply continued to be wholesalers solely. Many companies have come and gone over the years. I hope with all the changes, companies from the US will still be able to manufacture kits. The foreign companies produce some fine kits (Tamiya, Hasegawa, etc.). American companies like Revell-Monogram have done a great job. So many kits are coming from China and just a few years ago none came from there, but now many of the American companies are having their kits made there.

The hobby business is getting tougher. Three of our main wholesalers have gone out of business in the past two years. Another problem is that the kit manufacturers wanting to save on production costs have now got a box that is paper thin (Revell). They went back to the two-piece box that was big improvement over the fold-open box, but it is so thin that when UPS gets through with it, they come in crushed and I have lost many a sale because the collectors want a good box and there are a lot of collectors out there. If consumers bug Revell about this, just maybe they will get the message; storeowners' complaints seem to fall on deaf ears.

The Internet is both good and bad. We have a web site and have gotten new customers because of it, but so many people come in and say, "I saw it on the Internet." Well, not all information on the Internet is correct. Not all kits are out as the consumer might think from checking the 'Net. Also, because it's out on the East Coast doesn't mean that it is available on the West Coast yet. Manufacturers sometimes jump the gun on the release dates and the retailer gets the flack for not having an item that hasn't been released yet. The Internet is a great tool to find information. We use it, but it's not the "be all-end all."

MR: Your store is stocked with tons of car models, military and armor, ships, space and figures as well as an aisle dealing with paint rack after paint rack. Looking back over the years, can you recall what particular type of model has consistently sold the best? The worst?

In the past planes sold the best, but with two base closures here in Sacramento, plane sales aren't what they use to be. Air Force personnel used to stop in and buy a lot of kits; those stationed here and those that flew in from other bases and countries. For the past ten years or so, cars have been the largest sellers by far. There are tons of add-on items for cars and they are not as specialized as aircraft or armor items, so we can stock and sell them because they will fit more than one kit, unlike aircraft and armor items that have to fit a specific model. We order those because it is hard to stock the ones that will sell and eat the rest (believe me, it's not fun to eat merchandise!). Low rider models have been quite popular and the good part of that is the guys who buy the low rider items get their kids involved in the hobby. As far as best selling kits right now, I would have to say Revell's Mazmanian '41 Willy's Gasser and Revell's Acura Integra Type R. The most consistent top seller over the years for us was AMT's '64 Chevy Impala, but it is no longer produced. As for the worst, I will have to search my minute brain and say Bill Carter's Beer Pickup by Revell. We got the kit by mistake from one of our wholesalers, so I called him and told him that we got the kit and that we didn't order it and they didn't bill us for it. He said instead of sending it back to keep it because it was a dog anyway. He sure was right! We tried and tried to sell it,



An aisle full of figure and Sci-Fi kits!

but there were no takers. So, one day, I got the bright idea to price it at \$.10 and put a sign by it begging someone to buy it. It sat there for two weeks and no takers, so I raised the price to \$.99 and got rid of the begging sign and finally sold it! Now, it's a collector's item. Go figure. A close second would be the MPC growling Darth Vader head. We marked it down to \$.99 to get rid of it and now it's another collector's item. There are "dogs" in all categories but those two stand out more than the rest.

MR: Let's talk about figure-related kits. I notice that one aisle in your store has quite a few, from Halcyon to Lunar Models to GEOmetric to Polar Lights

and quite a few in-between. What about them made you want to begin stocking them in your store? From the looks of it, you have some old figure kits dating back 8 years or so. Was there a time when they were selling well, or did they ever really sell well here in the Sacramento area?

Figure kits have always been so-so sellers for us with a few exceptions of hot items from big movies. We used to sell more when we carried games since a lot of gamers were into the figures also, so we had the crossover business. Of the kits mentioned in your question above, Polar Lights are far and away the best sellers, but plastic kits are easier to build than resin or vinyl kits. We also bought many of the figure kits in big numbers when wholesalers had closeouts and that is why we have some that have been here for some time, but the stock is almost gone on those. Along similar lines, we carry a lot of Japanese Sci-Fi items; Gundam kits are the most popular and we have been carrying them since the early 80s when Starblazers was the fad. Star Trek and Star Wars kit were really good sellers, but have been discontinued and we don't have much left. Hopefully, somebody will make kits from the new series.

MR: Racing Champions purchased AMT/Ertl and the emphasis since has been on the die cast end of things. Model production is down from Racing Champions. What do your customers say to you about that? Have they noticed? Are they upset? Do they roll with the punches? What, if anything, has been Racing Champions' response to the dealer such as yourself with respect to lower availability of models?

Problems with AMT started before the purchase. AMT started making kits in Mexico instead of the US and many people got mad at them for that and said they wouldn't buy any more kits from them. I'm sure that hurt sales and probably helped them decide to sell. Well, today, many American kits come from China and I think Mexico would have been a better choice. Modelers gripe if a kit doesn't come out the exact day it is suppose to, so now most companies don't give a date so they don't get calls from modelers complaining. Revell got rid of their 800 number and are relying on their web site or letters to answer questions and I am sure part of that was because of the complaints they were getting about release dates. Modelers should be happy because today there are far more items available than ever before and the less complaints, the better served they will be.

Well, back to the AMT purchase. Yes, the modelers noticed because of far less product and AMT's almost non-existent customer service since the purchase. They are upset and I must say justifiably so. Many have accepted it in stride or don't even know that Racing Champions is the new owner. I personally have not contacted them. I have seen letters that AMT has sent to consumers and was not impressed with the way that they are handling customers' problems. They only seem to care about die cast as you stated in your question. Die cast is instant gratification and requires no effort on the part of the consumer; just buy it and look at it. Wow, not too

Continued Next Page

exciting if you ask me. I would much rather build something and have hours of time relaxing and creating something. The profit per item is probably much higher for AMT than a model kit because they are probably easier to produce. I would like to see a model-oriented company purchase the model side of AMT and bring out more new and good reissue models. There is definitely a need.

MR: *Revell-Monogram seems to be going the same way as AMT/Ertl. Another die cast company has just purchased R-M and may wind up doing the same thing with them by winnowing the model production in favor of die cast. What's left for the hobby stores?*

One can only hope that they don't do the same thing to Revell-Monogram that Racing Champions did to AMT. As far as what's left for the hobby store, buy more imported kits and be selective of what is purchased because Revell-Monogram makes up a lot of our business and the loss of a large number of their kit production will hurt. As stated before, let's hope that they keep producing a good number of new kits and reissues because, as far as I can see, the demand is there for kits with good subject matter.

MR: *How has customer service been for the hobby shop dealer from the large modeling companies over the past few years? Have they tried to meet your needs as a representative of their product, or have you felt like you've been pretty much out there on your own?*

Revell has sent out information on product and catalogs to us for quite a few years and seems to care that we are up to speed with information on their products. AMT is another story. I used to get information from them a regular basis, but since the sale, almost nothing has been sent to us. Lindberg, Testors, Polar Lights and others send catalogs, as do many of the foreign companies. I think that the companies should take input from the shops, but none seem to care what we think. We are on the front line. Who better to take input from? I remember at a show several years ago mentioning to a Revell representative that they had many neat wheel and tire sets that came in the kits and that they could market them by themselves and they could get about half the price that a full kit goes and have no molding costs because they already had the tooling. Many modelers buy a kit just for the wheels and tires in it. I was basically laughed at. Well, look at what Pegasus has done in the aftermarket wheel and tire business at \$8.99 to \$9.99 per set. So, I think that the input of us lowly shop owners could be beneficial to the modeling companies as well as the industry as a whole. In my twenty-three years, the only factory reps to enter my store have been Testors reps and Tamiya reps. The Testors rep would stop by once or twice a year before he transferred back east, but I still talk to him on occasion. More interaction between shops and manufacturers would help everybody. We can all learn from each other. I'm a pretty independent guy, so I like the challenge of doing most things by myself and learning from my mistakes, but interaction is a good thing.

MR: *Looking ahead (or trying to), where do you literally see the hobby going? Don't sugarcoat it. If you think it's headed in a positive direction, great, let us know that, but if you are concerned about it, tell us.*

I think it is going in a positive direction, but the companies must realize that we are a small market and not expect gigantic numbers, but steady business. I had a business (my gas station) that was high volume and I made some pretty good dollars for several years, but it was sure great getting out of it and going into the hobby business. We have had a steady growth over the years. Haven't set the world on fire but our bills are paid and we are happy. Look at all the

dot coms that have come and gone. We are still here and plan to be here for some time to come. We just hope that modeling companies stay focused on what got them where they are at and produce product in decent numbers so we can all prosper.

MR: *Things come and go in this industry, but the thing that seems to have been fairly consistent is modeling even though it's had its major ups and downs. Card games came into the headlines. RC cars are big. Trains have been around for years. The big thing for the past few years has been trying to get new modelers into the hobby or helping modelers return after being away. In some ways, it seems like life has changed way too much to bring that many kids into the hobby, yet it remains the key to longevity for model building. What can the industry do or are they already doing everything they can to win over kids?*

We have to get the kids interested in building models again, but it's tough to get them away from the computer games. Revell has tried with their SnapTite, ProFinish and Make-It-Take-It programs, but it doesn't seem to be working as well as it should. Model clubs need to welcome kids, not treat them as inferiors, but teach them the basics of making a model. After all, when a kid gets through with a game on the computer, he has nothing to show for his or her time, but if he or she builds a model, they have something to be proud of and can show it off to their parents or friends. Society has become instant gratification. Kids can learn patience, improve their dexterity and be educated by building a model and even by today's prices, it's not an expensive pastime. Fads come and go, but models are steady all the time. Hopefully, adult modelers will get their children interested in building not only models, but many of the other hobby items to keep their hands and brains active. A busy child doesn't get into trouble and having a hobby keeps them busy. If more ads were on TV, it would help. Bachmann Trains has done a good job advertising and it shows. People ask for Bachmann by name thanks to their ads. I know advertising costs a fortune, but if the major companies targeted their ads on the right shows, it would help their sales.

Want to promote a military kit? How about the History Channel. Car kits? How about Speed Vision or a channel showing a car related show or movie. Cable rates are much cheaper than regular TV rates and with the proper targeting, offer much more bang for the buck. For the kids, do it on the type of shows they watch: cartoons, youth oriented sitcoms, etc.

Also, kids should start with a snap kit for their first project, so they don't get discouraged after their first attempt. If their first kit is too difficult and turns out a mess, they will get frustrated and probably not try one again. I get so many people who come in and want to buy a model for a kid. I suggest a snap kit and they get pushed out of shape because the kid that they are buying the kit for is real sharp and they think a snap kit would be too simple. Well, I haven't seen too many people, let alone kids, who were experts at doing something that they have never done before. I wish there had been snaps when I was a kid. I could have saved a lot of money (well, about \$.50 in those days for a kit) on all the kits that I ruined before I got it right.

I hope Revell keeps trying to get kids interested and maybe some of the other companies will step in too. I don't know what would work the best, but let's keep trying. Parents' input to the companies would help also. Contests help, but most places are like we are and don't have the room for them. Some of the clubs have contests and some are kid-friendly, while others are not. Let's look to the future and kids are the future and modeling keeps them on the straight and narrow.



Long ago, in an age where uncertainty reigned and the industry was still in its much maligned infancy, a decision was made to begin a magazine. The goal was to publish an issue six times each year, on time. This turned out to be a swell decision and it was heralded throughout the modeling kingdom. Growth was slow, but steady and eventually this magazine became a best seller, known throughout the modeling world as one of quality and timeliness. But without the constant quality-filled articles that are routinely supplied by some of the best builders and painters in the industry, this magazine would not have grown, it would not be continually growing and it would have little future. Since those who write for *Modeler's Resource* have helped this magazine become what it is now, it was felt that time and space should be set aside so that you can learn more about each of our semi-regular and regular writers. Here is the start of what will be a multi-part article that will run over a number of issues. You'll see our writers' faces and read their own words. And now, **PART ONE** of our "Writer's Box" where, among other things, you will find the answer to this immensely important question as it applies to each writer:

Who Are They and What Do They Want?

Bill Craft (left photo)

Hey guys and dolls. My current lair is in Southern California, where I have been slaving my life away at motion picture advertising for almost twenty-eight years. It's not as glamorous as one would think, but it's a decent living.

I must have been seven or eight years old when I began down that long modeling road of enlightenment. The first kit I spotted was an Aurora Frankenstein at a convenience store. I was with my uncle at that time, so I made him buy it for me. I believe it was a whopping 98 cents. That was the beginning of my modeling madness. I had to have all of them as they came out, not only the Aurora kits, but also any kit that featured figures. The days of building airplanes and aircraft carriers were over.

As many of you long time readers may know, my passion is for Japanese monster kits. I also enjoy classic Universal and Hammer film monster kits as well as Ray Harryhausen's creatures. The kits I like to build the least are kits based upon anime and superheroes. A "chick" kit every now and then is a good stress reliever.

I suppose the main aspect of modeling that I enjoy is the experimentation. I have never claimed to know everything about kit building and I am always open to new and innovative ideas. I don't have very many set formulas for rendering because I like to change things a bit every time and see what happens. I do however render the spines on Godzilla's back the same every time! Go figure. I spend about 40 to 50 hours a month, more or less, on my kit building, depending on life's other interruptions like domestic chores and all that.

My all time favorite model kit is the vinyl Billycan Bela Logos Dracula. I know it's not a Japanese monster kit, but that's the way it is.

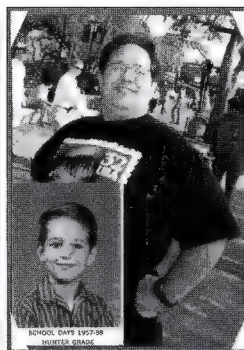
Let's see now, what would I change about the modeling industry? If I could wave my magic airbrush, I would certainly make a few bad people in this hobby go away, that's for sure. Aside from that, I suppose that I would want a better unity between modelers, sculptors and casters and yes, even the folks at magazines. As I stated once before in the editor's column, either we hang together to keep this hobby alive or we will all hang separately trying to destroy it. Obviously it was too much to ask, since the same bickering and lies continue to this day.

I choose to stay close to my own these days and out of the various forums of controversy. Hell, all I want to do is build cool model kits and if I can pass along any information to the masses about my modeling experiences and someone can benefit from that, then I believe I am doing a good thing for this wonderful hobby.

Jim Bertges

Join me now as I reveal a little something about myself and how I became the model-obsessed madman I am today. Long ago, I was born in the frosty climes of Alaska. I was born there because my dad was in the Air Force and that's where he was stationed. Being in the Air Force, my family moved all around the country regularly. We bounced from Alaska to Colorado to Maryland, back to Alaska then to Northern California and finally settled in Southern California. All of that moving is part of what turned me into a collector. Because we were only allowed to take a certain amount of stuff along when we moved, the first things to be discarded were most of the kids' toys. So I've spent the rest of my life keeping everything I had and trying to find all those old toys I had to throw away every time we moved.

Being in the Air Force was also partially responsible for my discovery of modeling. On our second stint in Alaska, we spent a year living on the Air Base and I met lots of kids who were already into building models. Of course, I went along with the crowd and found that I really liked it. Besides, we were living near Fairbanks, Alaska where you get only a few hours of sunlight a day during the



winter and there's not much else to do but stay inside and build. The first kit I remember building on my own was a Sabre fighter jet, probably by Revell. I also remember my dad building the Strombecker Disney spaceships and Space Station for me. My most vivid model-related memory of that time is of the huge Revell Atomic Cannon kit I was given for Christmas. I was only eight at the time and that kit was far beyond my skills, so my dad was going to build it. Well, in order to be helpful, I

snapped every part off the sprues, not realizing that those little numbers next to the parts actually meant something. My dad was actually able to build the kit, eventually, and I learned a lot of new words that I was told not to repeat.

When we moved to Northern California, the kids I met were heavily into model cars and I discovered the joys of the AMT 3-in-1 kits. It was also where I discovered a magazine called *Famous Monsters of Filmland* and resumed a life long love affair with monsters. In that magazine I saw ads for the Aurora Frankenstein model, but it wasn't until several years later and yet another move to Southern California that I actually laid my hands on one. It was 1963, in Disneyland, where I discovered a stack of Frankenstein kits and had to have one. That was the kit that set me on the road to becoming the modeler I am today.

My main interest in modeling today leans toward the fantasy and science fiction aspect of the hobby, but I will and have built just about anything. Cars, tanks, spaceships, boats, figures, airplanes...bring it on and I'll build it. If it comes in pieces, I'm willing to take a shot, put it together and paint it, no matter what the subject.

The same philosophy pretty much applies to the act of modeling itself, I like it all. I enjoy taking a kit home and opening the box to inspect the parts, checking out the instructions and deciding how to tackle construction. I like the challenge of figuring out how to make a less than perfect Garage Kit go together and represent the original intent of its creator. I like throwing myself a curve every once in a while and trying something I've never done before. I really like learning and using new techniques and helping to get the word out about new, fun ways of building kits. In the end I like displaying, sharing, showing off my finished kits and getting some feedback on them. After all that I start looking forward to the next kit.

When I'm deeply into building something, it's not unusual for me to spend fifteen to twenty hours a week at the workbench. Of course there are times when I can't think of what to do next and I have to walk away and let it rest for a while. After a little break, it's always more fun to get back to that next project.

If I was able to change something about the modeling industry today, I would simply tell them to advertise, get out there and discover those new model builders and revive the interest of former modelers. The plastic kit manufacturers in the United States need to stop feeling sorry for themselves because they think the hobby is in a decline and get out there to remind people how much fun modeling can be. They can take a hint from Bandai and their TV and print ads for their Gundam kits. They need to show kids how cool it is to create something and remind the older modelers how much satisfaction they got from the hobby. Kit manufacturers have the ability to reach an audience that will willingly embrace the hobby if they are shown that modeling is an exciting and vibrant activity that builds self-esteem and pride along with really great models.





**FROM
THE
LAIR
OF THE
Craftbeast**
With
Bill Craft

INTRODUCING THE NEW A&C WOLFMAN

Okay! You are probably asking yourself right about now, "Oh, great! Another Wolfman kit!" Ah my little modeling friends, let me tell you a tale. A tale of sorrow. A tale of misery. A tale of, oh the heck with it!

This Wolfman is in scale to all your Horizon and Billiken monsters and the likeness is an incredible tribute to both Lon Chaney Jr. and makeup artist Bud Westmore.

Expertly sculpted by that veteran madman, Jeff Yeagher and superbly cast and produced by the fiends of Monsters In Motion, this is one awesome Wolfman. Casted in seven solid pieces, except for the hollow cast main body, the M.I.M boys have pleased the ol' Beast once again.



Of special note is the new blue resin. I wonder what happened to that infernal pink resin? Hum? Keep the pink stuff for the chick kits!

THE BASE

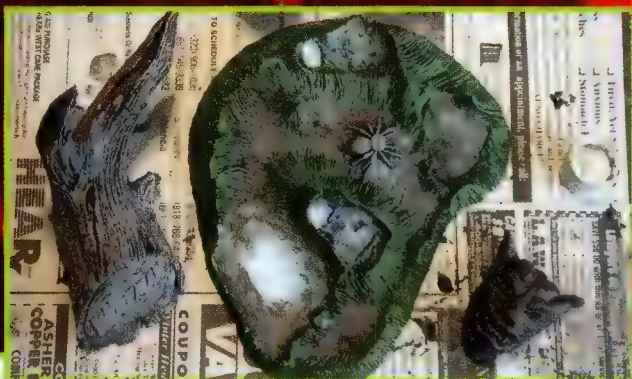
The base is a pretty straightforward rendering job. I began by antiquing all the parts with black stain to fill in all the recesses. I then airbrushed transparent green on the grass areas. This was followed by Burnt Sienna for the ground cover.

The tree stump was drybrushed with a combination of light beige, black and white.

The party wolf mask was drybrushed with shades of brown.

The logo on the base was rendered in bright yellow. The spider was given a treatment of black with red highlights.

I finished the base by first going around the edges of all protruding objects with transparent shading grey and then I ended the adventure with a bit of drybrushing. Light green for the grass, light beige for the ground covering and a touch of white on selected areas for extra highlights.



THE MAIN BODY

As far as wolfy's clothes are concerned, you can either let your imagination run wild since the film was in black and white or you can consult film historians. I kinda go halfway. I rendered the pants medium grey with a fine splatter of black from my airbrush. Transparent shading grey was introduced in the recesses. The shirt was first rendered black and then white highlights were added with an airbrush. I then gave the belt a once-over with black and added a pewter grey buckle.



THE HAIRY PARTS

The final pieces I rendered were the hands, feet and head. After antiquing the pieces in black, I airbrushed Transparent Burnt Sienna over the entire hair surface leaving only the face and palms untouched. I then drybrushed white over the pieces to bring out the detail.

Transparent shading grey was next introduced to the untouched areas as well as concentrating the color into any creases and recesses.

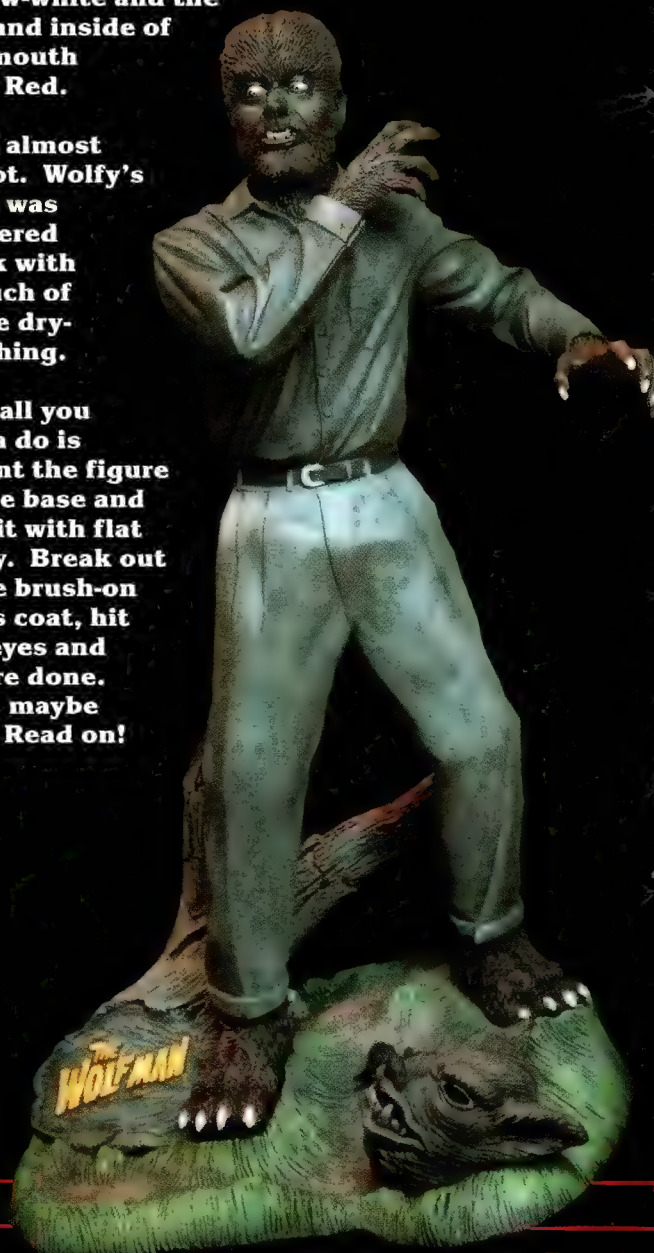
The claws and toenails were rendered with light flesh and then accented with a Burnt Sienna wash.

The eyes were given a treatment of off-white for the eyeball with a red wash around the edges. A solid black pupil with white iris glints finished them off.

The teeth were rendered yellow-white and the lips and inside of the mouth Rust Red.

Oh, I almost forgot. Wolfy's nose was rendered black with a touch of white dry-brushing.

Now all you gotta do is mount the figure to the base and seal it with flat spray. Break out some brush-on gloss coat, hit the eyes and you're done. Well, maybe not. Read on!



CREATING A CLASSIC MONSTER'S PLAYGROUND!

Now it's time to take the whole base thing to a higher level. I have always liked modelers who have the insight and creativity to combine more than one figure to a particular setting. The Wolfman kit gave me some inspiration for this display base.

Since this excellent Wolfman kit is in scale to some of my other classic monster kits, I got an idea to create a center stage for them. Of course, this stage can also be used over and over again for other beasts as well as a backdrop for photographs.

I began to gather all the necessary components for this project. A 16 x 20 pine base would be the foundation. Two

slabs of 9 x 12 high density Balsa Foam that is 2 3/8 inches thick.

Two 9 x 12 pieces that are 3/16 of an inch thick.

An assortment of dried flowers and mini vines. A sheet of 3/16 of an inch thick, black foam core.

Now all I gotta do is add the creativity part.



Clever eyes can spot the difference between Lon Chaney's previous Wolfman films and the look he had in "Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein."

This piece goes great with M.I.M.'s other stellar kit, "Strange Encounter." The Glenn Strange, Frankenstein Monster kit. I placed the classic Billiken Lugosi Dracula in my diorama since the sculpture is not the classic 1931 look, but rather the later year's interpretation. A big super hint to M.I.M. on this one. I would like to see Jeff Yeagher tackle a Bela Dracula kit.



I started by gluing one of the 2 3/8 thick Balsa foam blocks to the rear of the base. I then measured and cut the two 3/16 pieces to wrap around the main block from the front. A hacksaw works good on the thick pieces.

The other 2 3/8 inch block was divided into three equal sections to be used as stone columns on either side of the base. The third column was cut in half to be used to extend the height of the two columns.

I then took the discarded sections that I cut from the two front sections and cut half an arch from each piece.

With all the parts cut out, I then began to measure out my stonework. I used a small metal file to etch deep stone section lines in the foam.

The next tool I utilized was a stiff wire brush. I used the brush in a swirling motion over the foam to give the stonework that sloshed on look. The brush was also used to gouge out selected areas for that worn gothic look.

I then went back in with my metal file and detailed in some cracks.

I purposely carved in my stonework borders in a somewhat uneven fashion. I didn't want the stonework looking too perfect or clean.

A note of warning here. When one carves or sands this stuff, the material gets everywhere. It is like powder. A mask would definitely come in handy here since you don't wanna breath this stuff in.

Now break out the Liquidtex Gesso and brush it on the base. This will give the Balsa Foam more rigidity.

Once the Gesso had dried, I primed the base with black spray.





A visit to my local Michaels Art Supply got me some really cool plastic, mini ivy strands and some small scale, plastic, dark green plants.

Now it's a simple matter of placement. Not too much and not too sparse. Just the right touch here and there.

I also glued down individual leaves on the floor since ivy leaves do shed.

The last part of this puzzle was the addition of a simulated backdrop for the open archway. To this end, I airbrushed a misty cloud effect in an angle on the black foam core and adhered the section to the back of the base.

Turned out pretty cool, I think. Simple design. Not too gaudy and at the same time, it has just enough gothic flair to make any classic monster proud to be seen on it.

Now for the fun part. The rendering. The first thing I did was to apply a generous drybrushing of white over the entire base to bring out the highlights.

I didn't want my stonework just plain old grey. I wanted some color.

I used an artist sponge, a water bottle and three acrylic colors of green, medium brown and white to achieve the effect I wanted.



I placed all three colors on a paper plate splashing them with water. I used the sponge as a pickup and apply device.

I slowly began to blot the color mix on the stonework. A little more green in some areas while a little more of the other colors in other areas.

I worked this method until the entire base was blotched with color.

After the rendering was dried, I went in with a touch of white drybrushing here and there to bring out some more detail.

The last stage was the application of transparent shading grey in the recesses.



Questions or comments:
craftbeast@yahoo.com





Above Left clockwise: The Aries 1B and the One Man Space Pod garage kits, one of the many resin Federation style ships on the market, the recently produced NX-01 and the Aries 1B built up.

• AN OVERVIEW OF RESIN SCI-FI KITS •

At some point, every sci-fi model builder hits a turning point in the hobby. Eventually, model builders reach the point where they no longer want to build, or they have built all the Star Trek and Star Wars kits they could find. Face it, there is a finite number of Federation starship designs and AMT/Ertl churned out many of the same kits for 20 or 30 years!

So what is next for the starship modeler when you've built all the styrene kits? Figure modelers resolved this dilemma long ago. As most readers of *Modeler's Resource* know, there is a thriving industry of garage kits - model kits produced in limited runs from original sculpts by guys working in their basements and garages. And today, sci-fi builders are getting into the act creating a thriving market for spaceships and props of all types.

Actually, sci-fi garage kits have been around a long time, but not a lot of people knew much about them. One of the very first was a four-inch Jupiter 2

produced by David Merriman about 20 years ago. Lost in Space continued to be a popular subject. A company called Lunar Models achieved great success with their 16-inch Jupiter 2. It could be outfitted with a fully lit interior, figures, retractable landing gear and more. You could easily spend hundreds of dollars on this one ship alone.

Eventually Star Trek fans discovered the garage industry. The earliest products were Star Trek props - phasers, communicators and tricorders from the classic series. Fans wanted accurate replicas for their collections, but only poorly made toys were available. It wasn't long before this quest for accurate products expanded to starship models.

Today, you can find just about every kind of sci-fi spaceship in a variety of sizes and prices for virtually every model builder.

If you are into Federation starships, there is a wide variety of kits available in the 1/1400 scale - the same scale as Ertl's Enterprise large C, D, and E kits.

A popular line of kits has been produced under the name of Starcrafts. You can find ships ranging from the classic TV starship, to the vessels featured in the theatrical movies and recent television series. If you want a Prometheus, Akira, or Constellation, you can find these in the \$50 to \$75 range. Also popular are ships in the 1/2500 scale, which is the scale of Ertl's popular three ship sets. Prices for these small kits start as low as \$10. Klingons, Romulans, and other alien ships are also available. Would you believe someone has already produced a 1/1400 scale NX-01?

Classic science fiction movies have proven very popular. Various companies have produced versions of the Martian War Machine from the George Pal movie, War of the Worlds. One of the nicest out there is a large 12-inch ship mounted on a building diorama that comes complete with lights and a sound chip! 2001: A Space Odyssey is well represented by resin kits. Lunar Models produced a large 3-foot Discovery and other companies have released kits of the Discovery's pod and the Aries moon lander. Ships from Earth vs. The Flying Saucers, The Day The Earth Stood Still, Forbidden Planet, The Time Machine represent just a few of the many different kits out there.

Star Wars model builders have long been frustrated by Ertl's inaccurate styrene model kits. Because of this, one of the more exciting resin kit releases has been a large, detailed X-Wing built in the same scale as the studio models. The Y-Wing is another subject that sells well, but garage kits of this ship are harder to find. In addition to spaceships, Star Wars model builders will put out good money for reproductions of light sabers and blasters.

British science fiction subjects are also well represented. There are kits of the Space 1999 Eagle in sizes ranging from 11 inches to a full 44-inch reproduction of the studio miniature. Other Gerry Anderson television series, such as the Thunderbirds, are represented by a variety of ships in all sizes. One of my favorite garage kits is a resin Starbug kit from the hilarious series Red Dwarf.

While resin kits offer a variety of choices, they also require a little more skill than your average styrene kit. Resin kit parts may be brittle and easily damaged. They need to be scrubbed with soap and water to remove mold release before assembly and painting. Resin parts may need to be "cleaned up." Air bubbles from the production process may need to be filled, and seam lines from the molds may need to be sanded smooth. Resin parts need to be assembled using cyanoacrylate glue, also known as CA or "super glue", and the parts may need metal pins to help hold them together and provide greater strength. Resin dust can be hazardous to your health, so a filtered mask is recommended when you use sandpaper or a Dremel tool on the model.

Not all resin kits are created equal. Some kit producers are known for the quality of their product. Others produce cool kits that are difficult if not impossible to build. Over time, molds tend to deteriorate, and after a large number of kits are produced,

the quality of the product will decline. You will also find that there are many inferior recast kits on the market, often for prices too good to be true. You'll often find many inferior reproductions are sold through the Ebay™ online auction website. Shipping delays are not uncommon. Many garage kit producers run behind on production and orders may take months to be filled. A good rule of thumb is to know your seller. Ask your friends if they have dealt with the garage company. Know whom you are buying from. Personally, I like to buy garage kits at model shows like Wonderfest or Chiller because I can actually see the product I am buying and there is no wait.

With garage kits, one other thing to consider is that the model you want right now may not be available a month or two from now. Garage kit companies come and go. Old models are discontinued without notice and new kits come out all the time. I know a lot of people still searching for a large Whitestar kit from Babylon 5. These were produced for only a short period of time and are now highly sought after. If you see something and really want it, buy it!

So where do you find these sci-fi garage kits? Many are advertised in this magazine. Others can be found online through websites like Starship Modeler (www.starshipmodeler.com) and my own CultTVman's Sci-Fi Modeling (www.cultTVman.com). Check the links and news pages on those sites.

With so many great models to choose from, you should never run out of kits to build!



• NEWTON HOBBY CENTER •

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The First-Timer's Guide to...

Molding Your Masterpiece!

Publisher's Disclaimer: Before we let you get into this article, we would like to say for the record that it is the position of this publication that we are opposed to any form of illegally molding and casting something that does not belong to you. This article is not designed to teach or to encourage someone to take what they do not rightfully own, make a mold of it and profit from someone else's hard work and copyrighted material. That is simply wrong both morally and legally, but we know this disclaimer won't stop those who live on the other side of the copyright infringement laws and we also know that it's not going to push anyone over the edge into the dark underbelly of the modeling industry: recasting. Let your conscience be your guide and for those of you whose consciences have long ago been "seared," then nothing we can say will make a difference. However, for those who would like to learn the basics of molding and casting your own original product, this article may serve as a beginning.

We've run articles on molding before, but this one is slightly different. Not really knowing my way around silicone rubber, I wanted to see if I could successfully mold something. That something was our newest kit, David and Goliath.

Okay, I will be the first to admit that prior to this article, I didn't know how to create anything more than an open-face mold, which is reason enough that we paid Mark Brokaw to do all of our molding and casting on our models and have never received one complaint about the quality. In fact, we've received tons of compliments about the tremendous job that Mark does for us in the molding and casting department. I'm no Mark Brokaw or Dave Bengel or - you fill in the blank - when it comes to molding and casting product.

Over the years, since we first began producing our magazine and models, people have asked us what the process entails. I've quickly and frankly pointed out to these folks that I had little idea of how the molding and/or casting end of things was done. I wasn't afraid to tell them that because that was very much the reality where I was concerned.

Well, I had finally gotten to a point where my curiosity was fully piqued. I wanted to learn the process for myself and find out exactly what goes into



Above: Product provided by Bare-Metal Foil along with some Goliath parts. Below: Goliath parts being "clayed" up. Notice the left portion is smoothed with alignment holes placed.



it and how it's done. The first thing I did was talk to Dave Bengel, who is the owner of Skyhook Models. If you've ever purchased a Skyhook product, you already know that quality goes into each piece that they produce. I asked Dave if he would be willing to teach me the ins and outs of molding and casting using our next project from *Modeler's Resource*: David & Goliath. Dave responded with a slightly less than enthusiastic "yes" (knowing ahead of time the potential difficulties that awaited us), and that is how this article has been done. Without Dave's immeasurable guidance and know-how, you wouldn't be reading this right now. I never realized exactly how long it would take to mold something, but this particular model, which was beautifully sculpted by Gabriel Garcia, was in numerous parts and required someone with a deep knowledge of molding and casting to get the job done right. Thanks Dave!

The second person I contacted was Randy at Bare-Metal Foil. They sell a full line of supplies - everything you need for molding and casting. They were kind enough to provide me much of what I needed for this project in the way of Silicone Rubber, Resin, Release Agent, Kleen Klay and a few other odds and ends. What I saved on doing my own molding and casting and the product that allowed me to do both is being passed onto the customers in the form of the price of the final two-figure kit.

Once Dave said he was in and the folks at Bare-Metal indicated they would be willing to help with the project, the green light was fully blazing. Now, I sat back, waited for the product from Bare-Metal to arrive and for Dave and I to get a free day in our schedule to begin the process. It happened sooner than later and before I knew it, we were sitting at my dining room table looking at all the parts, with me particularly interested in watching Dave decide which parts would be molded together and exactly how the molds would be prepared.

I found out a number of things as Dave guided me through the process of creating molds. First, I found out that this was fun. I was gaining some firsthand knowledge about something that had eluded me for quite some time and someone who was very good at it was teaching me. Second, I quickly realized that this is not something I would choose to do for a career. My hat is off to people like Dave and Mark who routinely do this, sometimes day in and day out. It's fun, but it's not *that* much fun! Give me an article to layout or type or a model to paint any day, thank you very much!

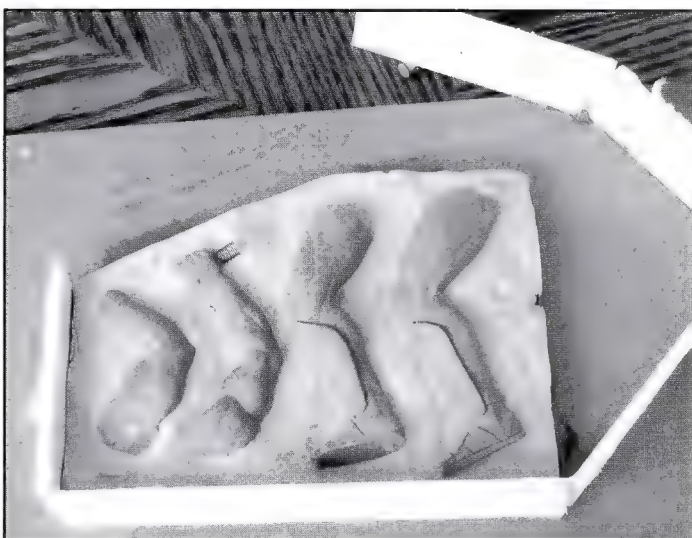
The first thing Dave taught me is that the parts need to be somewhat embedded in a clay "floor." This is done by taking the clay and flattening it out, piece by piece and then laying the parts on top of that area. Once the parts are placed in positions that are satisfactory to the molder, then it's time to fill in the areas around each part so that there are no spaces, holes or irregularities surrounding each part. The clay then needs to be smoothed out nicely and excess clay should be removed. Whatever you leave behind will become imprinted in the rubber mold! You can look



Above: The edge of the clay, where it meets the wall is smoothed out, eliminating gaps.



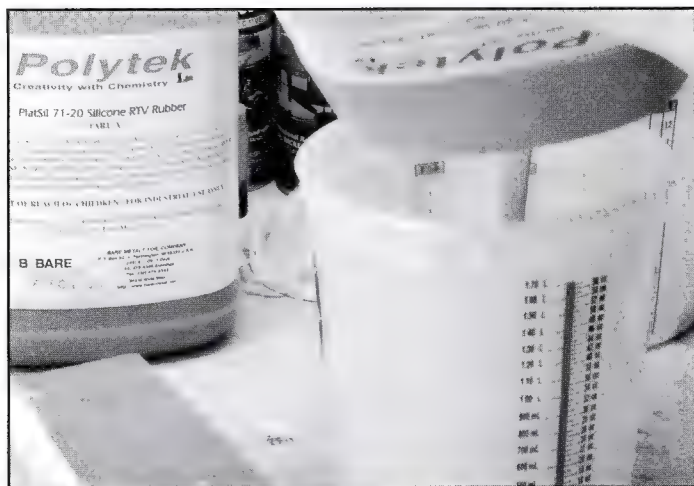
Above: The space between the sword handle and hand is being filled with clay to prevent air bubbles.



Above: Foam Core™ was used to create the wall that encircled the mold. This wall was one piece with creases, allowing it to bend at each corner. It was cut off and taped when the last two corners met.



Above: A pencil is used to create alignment holes in the clay.



Above: Rubber is created by using the same amounts of each part, A and B. The two parts will need to be mixed thoroughly until they become a solid purple color (in this case).



Above: Rubber is dribbled around and into the crevices of each individual part...

through the photos to see this process. There, the right half of the bottom photo on page 20 shows the clay before it has been completely smoothed. Some spaces and/or holes need to be eliminated as well. The left side of the photo shows the clay that has been smoothed with alignment holes having been placed as well. Now when rubber is poured over this, the surface of the rubber will conform to each part and come away with a nice, even surface.

Once all the clay has been added to the "floor" and around all the parts and smoothed, then a wall must be fashioned to hold the rubber mixture while it cures. The best and probably cheapest thing to use is Foam Core™, which is available in just about any drugstore or arts and crafts outlet. You'll want to make the walls about ½" above the highest point so that the parts are fully covered, yet it won't be so high that you'll be wasting a good deal of rubber, which isn't cheap! The more rubber used, the less flexible the mold will be. This may result in tears and/or premature aging. This is a bit of a guessing game here to be able to judge. There should be at least ½" to ¾" between the edge of the parts and the clay. You'll need room to create alignment holes. You will cut the clay all the way around in straight lines (square, rectangle, triangle, etc., whatever the design of the mold dictates) and then add the wall. If your mold is circular, then it will be difficult to use Foam Core, but some molds work better in the round depending upon the part as we found out for one particular part.

When creating the wall, you'll want to have the wall as one long strip, sliced on the outside so that you can bend it around a corner. You won't fully cut it off until you get to the last bend and join. Use Scotch™ tape to tape the two ends together and then tape the inside corner where these two ends meet as well to eliminate a seam line on the corner of the rubber.

Once you have the clay smoothed, the walls built and taped, you are ready to create the alignment holes. These were done by using the eraser end of a pencil and pushing it gently into the clay, while twisting slightly. They were placed at intervals so that the second part of the mold would "marry" itself into these holes and create the male side of the alignment holes. These holes are there so that the process of aligning the two sides of the mold when casting is accomplished much easier. It eliminates the guessing.

This particular rubber was created by using the same amounts of both parts. Once you have equal amounts of both parts, mixing is necessary to ensure that both parts meld fully. One part was pink and one part was blue, so when they are thoroughly mixed, they turn a nice shade of purple.

As you can see in the photos on the next page, we used a throwaway brush to spread the rubber around, after dribbling the rubber onto the top of the mold around each of the parts, as opposed to just pouring in the rubber and letting it settle. This method avoids trapping air bubbles, which would then become part of the mold. You'll also want to take care to gently pull on the brush tip before using it to spread the rubber so that any loose brush strands will come out in your



Above: ...and then brushed in to help eliminate air bubbles and surface irregularities in the rubber mold that is being created.



Above: Once the rubber was brushed around each part, more rubber was poured in and allowed to settle and self-level to create the first side of the mold.



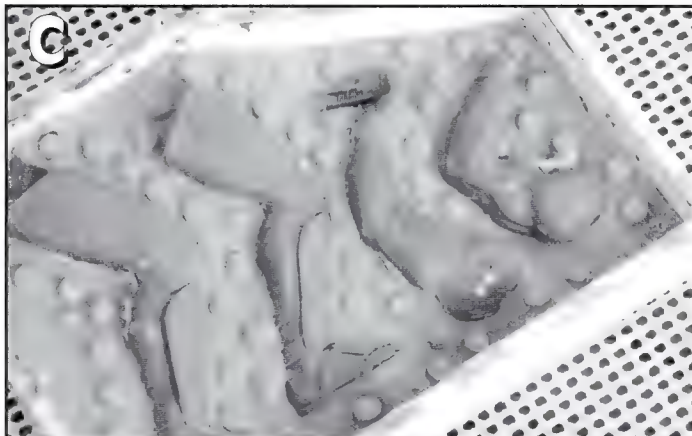
Above: Petroleum jelly must first be applied to the rubber that was poured for the first side. Any jelly that accidentally gets on the parts must be wiped off thoroughly!

hand and not become embedded in the rubber. Finally, once each part was completed brushed over with rubber so that there was no space or trapped air bubbles, the rest of the rubber was poured into the walled area so that the first side of our rubber mold would be created. Cure time was four hours, but I decided to let it sit for a day or so.

This is essentially it; however, it takes practice and a good eye to know which parts go together and this was only for the first few pieces. There are plenty of additional pieces in this kit to be molded.

The best way to learn molding and casting is to learn by doing. The best way to learn by doing is to have someone who is very adept at it teach you. There is nothing better than to learn something new under the guiding tutelage of an expert in the field.

Next time, we'll go through the process of casting and all that it entails!



Above: The rubber has been poured and has cured. The mold is then flipped over and the clay removed. Notice small portions of clay that still need to be removed before the rubber can be poured for the second side.



Above: After using the same "brush on" technique to apply the rubber, pour the remainder of rubber and allow it to self-level. This creates a perfect match for the first side of the mold. The finished product is shown on the first page.

Goodies & Gadgets

REVOLVING PAINT RACK

Here's a handy, dandy piece of lightweight steel! It's designed to carry a ton of paint bottles and it keeps them handy by allowing you to see your colors at a glance with a simple turn of the wrist.

This is not necessarily a cheap item though. Retail is right around the \$55.00 mark, but we picked up ours on sale at Michael's for \$34.99. It's very lightweight and holds up to 120 bottles.

Here's the problem: it won't hold the majority of bottles that most of us use in our painting, like Pactra, Testors, etc. It is designed to hold the longer and thinner craft paint bottles, like Ceramcoat. These bottles will fit nicely into each hole and stop at the back. Placing them in bottle cap first allows you to see exactly which color is in each bottle. The smaller bottles, while they might fit into each squared section, will not reach the back and will fall through. If you need a rack for all your craft-type paint bottles, this may be worth it for you.



PAINT TRAYS

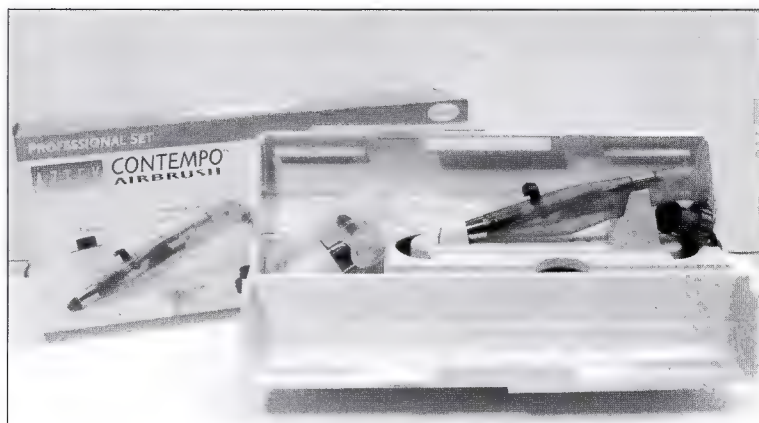
Speaking of something to hold your paint bottles, we were in our neighborhood drugstore and came across these little baskets. What I like about them is that each one can be stacked on top of another (if your bottles are all the same height) and if you organize them in these trays according to color/shade, then you simply need to pull out a tray, use the colors and put them back up on the shelf when finished.

My biggest problem has always been keeping an organized work area. When I'm in the middle of a project, everything gets everywhere and it usually gets all mixed up with each other. This system may work well by keeping me more organized.

Cost of each tray was 99¢ each. I picked up six or seven of these and for now, it seems to be working well. I'm happy, my paint area is happy, my worktable is happy. I'm just doggone happy!



AZTEC CONTEMPO™ AIRBRUSH



Here's something new from the good folks at Testors and their Aztec division. This Contempo Airbrush set comes complete with the A470 Single/Double translucent blue airbrush, 6' air hose, pipette for mixing and measuring paints, compressor adaptor, cleaning tool, general purpose acrylic nozzle, fine line solvent nozzle, 12cc paint cup and a storage case.

The unit also comes with a brief instructional pamphlet that shows cleaning techniques for this particular brush and how to set it up for either left-hand or right-hand use. The airbrush can be turned into either a single or double action airbrush as well.

You will most likely see more of this brush in an upcoming article or two and we'll talk a bit more about it then. Suggested retail price is \$89.00, which certainly seems to be a good bargain for what you get. More later!

www.testors.com

TAMIYA'S SPRAY-WORK BASIC COMPRESSOR



This just in! What was once discontinued is now available again.

This unit includes the following:

- Air compressor
- Airbrush
- Airbrush holder
- Wrench
- Color cup (17cc)
- Color cup (40cc)
- Air hose

The only item that is additionally required is a power source and that is sold separately, either a batter pack (Tamiya 7.2V) along with charger or an AC Adaptor.

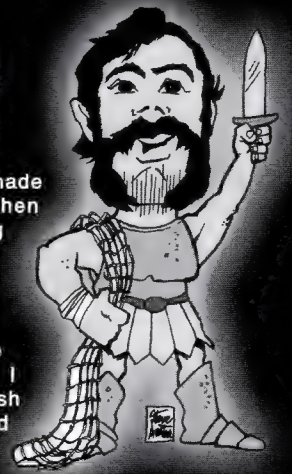
This unit is very lightweight and does not take up a large space. It's easy to pack and go if you're a modeler that's on the move a lot for shows, etc.

The 8-page pamphlet that is included with the compressor unit brings to our attention a number of things that will help keep our airbrush compressor and airbrush running smoothly for a long time including: compatible airbrushes, useable paints and thinning paints, paint flow adjustment, preparation for airbrushing, airbrush cautions, disassembly and cleaning and reassembly.

For more information, check with your local hobby store or head on over to Tamiya's Internet site, which can be found at: www.tamiya.com



In the Arena



with Steve Goodrich

First important note...these techniques apply to styrene, cold cast or resin pieces. Enamel paints should never, ever be applied to vinyl models as it weakens the vinyl and never properly dries.

A marvelous thing happened to me in getting these 2 pieces...at last I get to explain something I've been raving about for years!

When one has a good-sized collection in any subject matter and it keeps growing, pieces suddenly start looking all alike. But pieces that really stand out often are bronze or pewter castings. The catch 22 is that very few of us can actually afford the pieces that are done as limited metal castings. Well, with the right painting techniques, one may effortlessly duplicate metal finishes that replicate real metal and add a real touch of class to their display of pieces. I've had friends who are antique dealers who refused to believe that some of my metallic finished resin pieces were plastic until I proved it to them! The "jump out" pieces enhance the others rather than detract from them and the methods are so absurdly fast and easy.

N & T Productions in England has released some marvelously sculpted busts in cold cast. To demonstrate this technique I will be using the Penguin and Two-Face (Fig. A). These techniques may be applied to just about anything.

First, I sanded minor surface flaws on both pieces and washed them in dishwashing soap. The only prep work was to glue in the Penguin's cigarette holder and glue on the monocle. I used superglue along the entire length of chain on the monocle to secure it to the figure. In the context of a metal bust, it doesn't fit to have the chain dangle looking (Fig. B).

I chose to do Two-Face in bronze and the Penguin in gold. With one exception over the years, I have seen that enamel metallic spray paints often go dull and blotchy requiring a repaint. This is why one should always use acrylic metallics. They are plastic-based and keep their metallic look forever. The one exception I spoke of to enamels is gold. I have gold enamel finishes on pieces I did back in the late '70s and they are the singular ones that stand the test of time. So to prep anything for gold, just buy the cheapest store brand gold spray paint you can find.

To do other metallic finishes, I've had the best luck by priming the piece in flat white enamel, then painting with acrylic metallics. So, step one in painting is to basecoat the Penguin with the gold enamel spray paint and Two-Face with flat white. Several light coats to fully cover is the only way to go, letting each light coat dry fully between sprays to avoid runs. At this point with the gold (Fig. C), the Penguin looks wonderful, but I'm going for a more antique looking gold. But, if you get this far and want to call it done, you can have a "newly minted" gold figurine with just this one quick step! No need to even spray a protective sealant over it as enamel tends to seal itself. If, however, the pieces you apply this article to are vinyl, these priming steps should be done with airbrushing flat white or gold ACRYLICS as the base coats!

Now...back to the bronze. I get metallic acrylics at ceramic studios. They can also be found in craft departments of stores like Wal-Mart. Acrylics, in particular metallics, have improved over the years to such high standards that I now see the best price as the main factor in which brand is best. So just look at color samples and pick out a nice rich bronze metallic.

Apply 2 or 3 coats of the bronze paint over the primed piece. Acrylic metallics will be streaky with only a single coat, so let dry and add more until you have full coverage. Again, you may wish to stop here and look at the piece for a day or two before antiquing it. It's a lush, freshly cast bronze piece now, but continue on for the look of older patina bronze.

Back to the Penguin. I use pre-formulated water-based translucent and antiquing brushes (Fig. D) for doing the "wash"

stage. These are thicker than homemade watery washes and stay put when applied. Also, they dry slower giving you more time to work with them. I chose walnut for the antique. A homemade wash of deep reddish brown will work here. Just apply the wash to the entire piece and wipe down with soft cloth or paper towels. I found using the handle end of the brush with one layer of paper towel wrapped around it a wonderful tool for getting into tiny areas. You don't want to leave as much antiquing on the piece as you normally would as subtlety will make or break the look of real metal. I repeated the process over the bronze Two Face using turquoise translucent, again leaving less than normal amounts in the nooks and crannies. The more turquoise you leave, the more ancient the piece will appear.

As a final step I took a bright gold acrylic and lightly dry-brushed it over the entire bust. While this can't show up as well in photographs, the naked eye will see the slight added punch it gives. A light coat of spray fixative will add the protective coating and you're finished!

Let your imagination run wild with these super easy techniques! They are seldom if ever considered as a viable way to finish pieces, yet turn out gorgeous! You can also achieve an interesting silver effect by basecoating with silver acrylic paint and using a black wash.

Next, I will be continuing with my praises of what can be accomplished with metallic paints. This project is to show what can be done to create a slimy looking finish. The subject is that one of a kind guy, Slimer from "Ghostbusters."

A word about the kit first. From Dan Perez studios, this is the ultimate piece ever done on Slimer. It is truly Marquette quality and would make a neat foundation

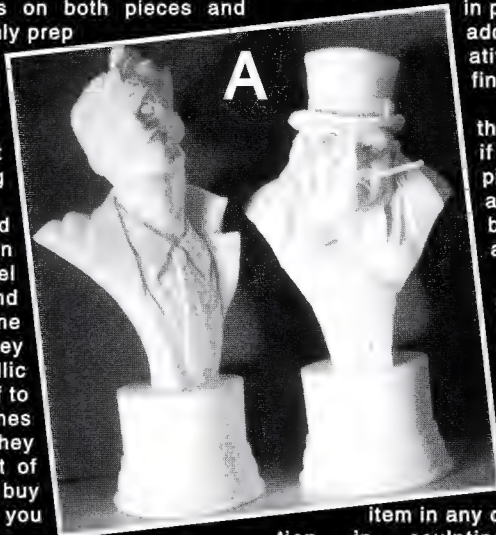
item in any collection. You can read about Dan's inspiration in sculpting this piece on his web site: <http://home.houston.rr.com/dpstudios/>. Are we ready to have some fun now? Great!

As a first setup step, I washed all pieces to the model in dishwashing detergent and let dry. Then I glued in the upper teeth section (FIG. E). That's it for this first part; painting will go much easier prior to full assembly.

Now, as with any thin resin pieces, there is no way to avoid pieces slightly warping out of shape when they are pulled from the mold. Here's a little trick I use to correct this...dip the pieces in boiling water to soften them! With Slimer we worked with one arm at a time dipping the hand and forearm in the hot water for about 30 seconds. Then the arms are test-fitted and fingers are easily manipulated into their correct pose and allowed to cool locking in the pose.

Next is the very important step of priming the pieces. I use spray enamel paints to prime resin. Enamel will bite into the resin where plastic-based primers won't. While acrylics grab the surface very well on flat enamels, they won't on gloss enamel. So always go with flat enamel primer. I used white in this case and brand is unimportant. Give all the pieces 2 or 3 light coats of primer to avoid runs that one heavy spraying may cause.

First step is to do the mouth. This goes fast and easy. Basecoat all of mouth interior up to but NOT including lips with a redwood or rust color. Next, I drybrushed pink on the tongue and gums and painted a solid coat of ivory on the teeth. I then used yellow/brown chalk and scrubbing a small stiff bristle brush across the piece of chalk to pick it up, I scrubbed the chalk into each





tooth along the gum line. This picked up ivory chalk to blend the yellow into the greater portion of unchalked ivory tooth. Then I added a light misting of finishing spray to set the chalk so it doesn't accidentally get smeared. (Note: If you use and are more comfortable with a wash when "grunging" up teeth, by all means substitute using it in place of the chalking.)

I next glued in and puttied up the lower jaw, taking care to texture the putty area with random tiny pit marks to match the overall skin texture (FIG. F).

Now you will need a medium green metallic paint and gold (Acrylic). If you can't find these in the craft section of a Wal-Mart type store, look in the phone book for ceramic studios near you. Most ceramic shops have a great line of metallic and pearl paints. I gave a couple coats of the green metallic paint to all the surface of Slimer except, of course, the painted mouth interior. Then I mixed half green and half gold paint to drybrush all of Slimer (FIG. G). This gives that green slime effect. This is a vividly glowing piece at this point looking more lime green than gold. Attempts to photograph the true nature and coloring of metallics are just an exercise in futility as they are so highly reflective they capture colors in the room as well, but the effect is still visible in these pictures.

Now, the fingernails are painted ivory and chalked or washed the same way the teeth were done only in a medium brown (FIG. H).

I coated the eyes with white paint and allowed to dry. While Slimer's eyes are small, you can still get a good effect on the eyes if you lay on a light wash of maroon allowing it to pool around the rims. Next, I used a toothpick to dot in the blue of each iris. You can use the toothpick like a rubber



stamp; this allows you better control over addressing very small areas and you can play the eyes into tracking with each other much easier and faster than you can using a brush. When the blue has dried, I again use a toothpick to dot black in the center of each iris, the black is the pupil. Last, using a fine brush (I have an old worn one with about 3 hairs I use for this), I paint a small white speck off center of each pupil for the highlight. Funny how something so tiny can make the eye look so much more alive.

Finally, we coat the eyes and mouth interior with high gloss fixative. Final step is gluing the arms in place and using putty at the joints and the metallics to touch up if needed. A final coat of ultra gloss spray will make Slimer even wetter looking than he already does.

Slimer is now ready to be your muse of good times!





Above & Below: the Jetsons® Spacemobile and the Seaview

I've wanted this kit since I was a kid. In fact, I remember when I was in elementary school trying to recreate a reasonable facsimile out of spare parts and whatnot just so I could have a Jetsons® Spacemobile of my own. Shortly after Jim Bertges created his scratchbuilt spaceship article for this magazine a few years back, I asked him to try and come up with something that would be worthy of the Jetsons. Little did we know then that a number of years later, the good folks at Polar Lights would create their own licensed version for modelers everywhere. Ah, the glory days of modeling are back!

Hey George!

This is one of PL's kits in their snap line. It's geared toward kids because of a number of things:

- 1) The parts literally snap together. No glue is required.
- 2) The parts are already painted. The figures, for mass production, are done well in my opinion, in both the sculpting and painting areas.
- 3) The spacemobile itself is already painted.

The Parts

There are 20 parts to this kit and it's very easy to simply put it together without much fanfare and stick it on the shelf. That's the temptation, but the other temptation was to enhance it. I began by looking through Jetsons comics at my friendly neighborhood comic bookstore and came up with two recent issues. Fortunately, one had a couple of decent pictures of this very same Jetsons spacemobile. I noticed that it was two-toned in color and I'm sure this was due to the fact that the artists simply wanted to produce a

shadow/highlight effect. I decided to use just one bright green for the exterior. I also decided to add a few decals to the kit's dashboard area...you know, dials and such. The instructions suggested tan for the interior seats and that's what I decided to use. It complimented the green I was planning on using for the exterior.

The kit also included a stand and puffs of "smoke" exiting the exhaust. These two parts along with the windshield and bubble top were injection-molded in clear styrene, so you can have all kinds of fun airbrushing the tailpipe exhaust or leave it clear. A planetary design along with the Jetsons name is sculpted into the clear stand. All in all, there is plenty of color on this kit without even discussing a backdrop or diorama to place the spacemobile in.

The Diorama

Ever since Dave Metzner was kind enough to send me a test-shot of this Jetsons spacemobile, I continually ran scene after scene through my mind regarding what might be a possible diorama for this spacecar. If you know me at all, you know that I don't necessarily like to simply place the kit on the shelf. I normally go for a diorama of some kind so that a story unfolds.

I was having a tough time with this one, mainly because I knew that the diorama would have to showcase an outside, way-up-in-the-air kind of scene, or I could create a dio of the car parked in the Jetsons' garage. The latter idea wasn't thrilling to me, so I was left with trying to come up with a physical diorama depicting where the Jetsons lived. In the end, I decided to create something in



Bryce® 5 and use it as my background. If I chose to, I could easily print this out and place it behind the space-mobile on the shelf. At least it would have some type of background rather than just sitting on the shelf. The above picture that introduces this article is what I eventually settled on.

Building

Unlike a few of the other snap kits produced by PL (like the Mystery Machine), this kit truly goes together easily. Polar Lights also eliminated a potential problem by including figures that were already completely built and painted. (This is probably what should have been done with Scooby and Shaggy in their Mystery Machine snap kit.)

If you choose to paint the kit, you'll want to do so while it is unassembled for the obvious reason that if you don't, you'll have to worry about overspray. I glued the fins and various parts onto the main body of the spacemobile prior to painting it. Once this was dry, I chose a nice green for the overall body.

As previously mentioned, the seats were painted tan, the decals applied to the dashboard, the Jetsons figures along with their faithful companion Astro were glued to the seats, the bubble was placed and we were done!

The Figures

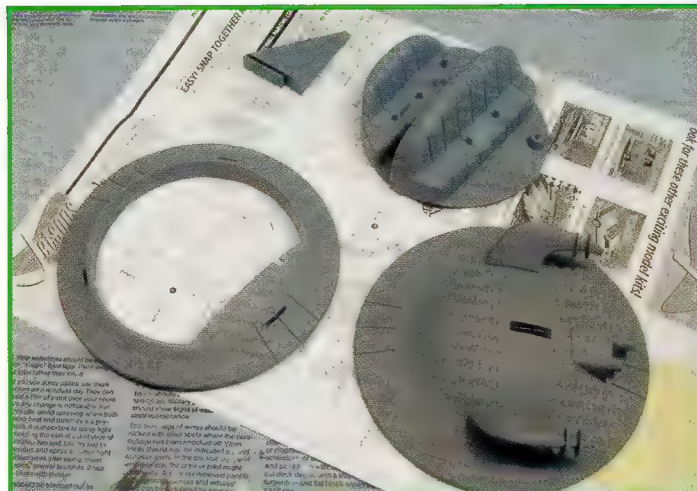
For those not wanting to paint the figures, the fact that they are already done for you is a nice plus. Those who don't like the paint job can certainly go the distance and repaint the figures, but it really isn't necessary. As with any aspect of modeling, the choice of how much you want to do or how far you desire to go is totally up to you.

Done So Soon?

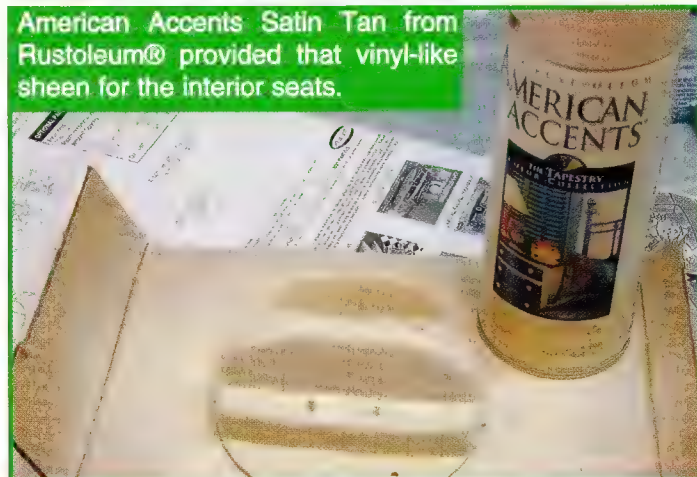
It seems like I just started and I was already done! In truth, I spent more time creating the picture-backdrop than on building and painting this model. It was refreshing to me because sometimes my models/dioramas become so involved that I'm tired of working on them before I get done! This did not present that problem at all.

More Snaps to Come

Without getting on my soapbox, I would like to say that it's funny when I hear about those complaining that part of PL's Godzilla® kit is out of scale (the train is too small, etc.) or that this snap kit isn't that great or that one doesn't have enough detail, etc. With kits like this out there, what better way to entice kids into modeling? Granted, Godzilla isn't a snap kit and some parts of the model aren't as well texturized as other parts; there is also a scale dif-



American Accents Satin Tan from Rustoleum® provided that vinyl-like sheen for the interior seats.



ferential between a few parts (if everything had been done in scale with Godzilla, the model would have been twice as huge as it was, costing more money, taking up more space and undoubtedly requiring more parts).

We can look forward to a number of snap kits upcoming that we've highlighted previously: Back to the Future DeLorean and the Ghostbusters' Ectomobile. My son has plans for both of those vehicles. He's excited about both of them and while he loves the BTTF trilogy of movies, he has never even seen the Ghostbusters movies.

These snap kits provide a level of enjoyment for kids as well as those who haven't yet become too jaded to enjoy their modeling still in whatever shape, subject or size it comes in. These models offer something that even the advanced modeler can go after. The kit goes together

• Continued Next Page •



quickly and painlessly you say and that's a problem? Great, put some extra effort into modifying the model or creating a super-detailed diorama.

Injection-molding has its limitations and it is not as forgiving as resin or even vinyl. But for \$10 to \$15, these kits are worth their weight in gold because of their ability to make kids feel included in modeling when they see these kits on the shelf. They will be grateful that someone is thinking of them by providing models that they are possibly interested in building. I just turned 45 and I'm STILL interested in the Jetsons! Here's a big "attaboy!" Polar Lights. You've made this modeler one happy camper. Keep them coming if you please!

Our Favorite Atomic Submarine

Now let's move onto another show that many of us enjoyed when we were kids. It had high tech gadgetry in the form of an indestructible submarine and what the show's characters referred to as the "Flying Sub." Of course I'm talking about "Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea."

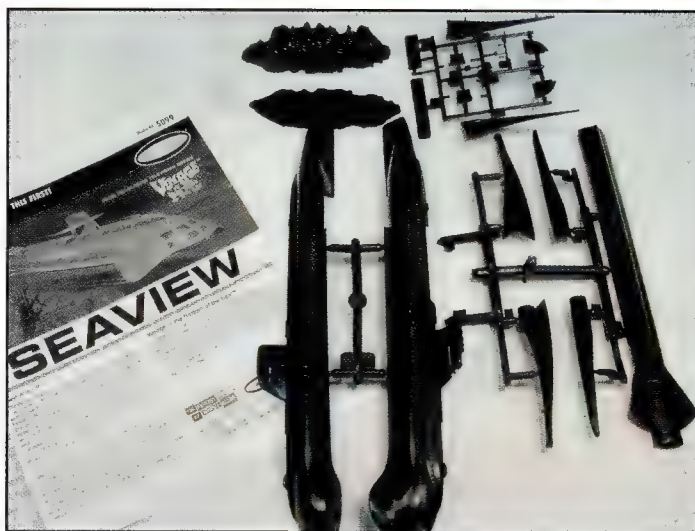
Maybe it's just me and my own memories of the past, but it sure seemed like we had the best TV shows when I was growing up. Don't tell my daughter that though, because, according to her, the best shows are on TV now and they were created in her generation. Okay, I'll let her believe that dream.

Every week, some monster or something would try to attack the Seaview or its crew or both. Every week, we could count on the terror of the unknown and the crew's struggle to free themselves from the grip of the nefarious and sinister...whatever it was that came to wreak havoc and destroy!

The Seaview, as the sub was known, was a technological marvel and just looked really cool! When Aurora first produced this kit, tons of them were sold to boys who wanted to command their own atomic submarine. I remember trying to put this kit together the first time and I felt like I needed three hands because of the parts themselves! I did a bit better with this licensed Polar Lights reissue, most likely because my hands are bigger, but you'll still want to take care and go slowly.

Three Hands Would Still Be Good

As you may or may not remember, you feel like you need three hands to put this model together! It's not really that bad, but a third hand would certainly help. The kit that Dave Metzner sent me was a last test shot, sent for review. There would only be very minor changes made for the production kit. The frames of the main observation window are raised lines, four sides in the finished kit. Apart from this, the kit is virtually the same (in the fit and part department) as the original Aurora kit.



Below: Tenax-7R was used as the gluing agent to adhere parts. It acts quickly and there's no mess to deal with, so you can move right onto the next section.





I found it helpful (and quicker) to use Tenax-7R liquid glue. You hold the parts together and run your Tenax-dipped brush along the seam. Voila! The parts melt together. Superglue has a tendency to melt to the point of destroying certain plastic parts, or at least weakening them. I wanted to avoid that, but I didn't want to wait a long time and that might have happened if I had chosen to use regular tube glue.

Seaview Takes Shape

There were only a number of minor difficulties. The rear fins and exhaust tubes didn't fit squarely against the edge. Part of the problem was that the guide pins didn't quite fit into the holes well and the other problem was that the fins need to bend slightly to follow the contour of the main body. I probably worked too fast and wound up with a slight gap between the right fin and the body. You have the choice of removing the locator/guide pins too, which would make things a bit easier to line up; however, the locator pins actually make it easier to hold the part for gluing, so ultimately, it's your choice.

Painting

The sub is actually a gray, although people have debated about the exact color. To me it's gray, so I picked

out a nice gray primer that the folks at Rustoleum make. This particular primer, being a high quality grade, has a finer paint pigment so it went on very smoothly. Most primers have a very dull finish to them, but this one had a very slight sheen, which is what I was going after. I also decided that I wasn't going to worry about the clear parts, since I was planning on painting them a white or light yellow. That always struck me odd about this kit, that you have a clear window in front so that you can see into an empty chamber.

The Base

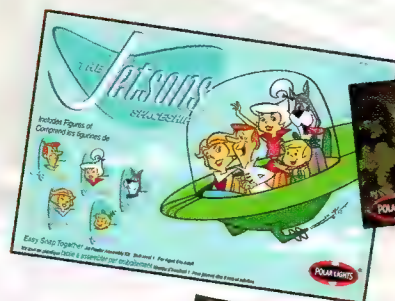
The base is the original, small but it supports the sub well. I actually spray-painted it with greens and browns, detailed the nameplate and it was done. Another fine nostalgic effort from Polar Lights. Fun, isn't it? Keep your eyes open for more from Polar Lights including two Batmobiles (diecast) and one Batmobile (injection-molded) as we mentioned in our last issue's "Coming at You!" section. Also, we'll have the Back to the Future DeLorean and Ghostbuster's Ecto-mobile in upcoming articles very soon.

Man, does life as a modeler really get any better than this?!



"MAKE A BASE" CONTEST!

Brought to you by two companies within the industry that stand for QUALITY!



TWO PRIZES:

- Any currently available Polar Lights Kit
- A one-year subscription (or extension) to Modeler's Resource®

TWO CATEGORIES:

- Kids 12 and Under
- Adults

PURPOSE:

Put your creativity to work and use either the Jetsons' Spacemobile or the Seaview in a diorama of your own design and making and then enter your photos in this contest. You could be a winner! One winner in each category.

Winners agree to have their photos placed on either the PL or MR website or both and/or highlighted in the pages of Modeler's Resource magazine. All photos become the property of Modeler's Resource and cannot be returned. Stay tuned for more details upcoming. **Contest deadline to be announced soon.**



It's All Plastic To Me

I have been asked, "How do you manage to get so many kits built for your column in *Modeler's Resource*®? I can barely get two or three built in six months." Well, I thought I'd take the opportunity of this column to answer that question, since I built and painted twelve kits this time around. I paid attention to exactly how I did it so I could share any "secrets" I discovered with our readers. To my surprise, I found out that I had no secrets, but I did have a technique for getting multiple kits done in a fairly short amount of time.

First of all, I consider my review duties for *Modeler's Resource* a job and as such, I know I have to devote a certain amount of time to it. When I'm in a building frenzy, I'll devote anywhere from one to three hours a night at the workbench. This is usually after everyone else in my house has drifted off to dreamland or their own individual pursuits. When I actually start attacking the kits, I'll set up a sort of assembly line. Since these are all resin kits, the first thing I did was to wash all the parts. When the parts were dry I did as much assembly as I could, keeping in mind that some parts and sub-assemblies would be more easily painted separately. Fortunately only three of the twelve kits required extensive assembly; the rest were busts or only had two or three parts to attach. After that came repair and putty work; again I was fortunate that these were all pretty cleanly cast kits and only two required more than minimal putty. Then everything got a coat of primer, some in black and some in white, depending upon how I planned for the finished piece to look. Even the painting went in steps, base coats came first, going from kit to kit applying browns or blacks or greens wherever they were needed on each one. This was a spot where spray cans came in very handy. When the base coats were dry I did all the shading, washes and some drybrushing where it was needed and sealed all my work so far. This was the point where each kit got individual attention as I finished up their details. That's how it's done; get as much stuff done at one time as possible and save the details for last. Now let's take a look at how all these kits turned out.

Kickass Studios "Thrasher"

Thrasher is one massive chunk of resin. He stands fourteen inches tall on a base that



measures eight and a half by ten inches. You'll need to clear a large spot on your shelf for this warrior lizard. Thrasher is one of several characters from an adventure comic book that Kickass is developing and makes an impressive first offering from this fledgling garage kit producer. Assembly of this big fella was a bit of a challenge, but the final result is well worth the work. The body consists of ten parts, not counting the spines that run down his back and tail. Prior to assembly, large resin remnants from the casting process had to be removed and mating surfaces need to be ground down for a proper fit. The folks at Kickass incorporated a nice male/female mating system for some of the parts, but this didn't always work as well as it could have. Some of the mating points had to be reworked to get a nice fit. When the major parts were assembled, there still were some large gaps to be tended to. I made a quick texture stamp with liquid latex and used Magic Sculp to fill the gaps and re-sculpt lost detail. The texture stamp made this a pretty quick process. Once assembled and with the seams taken care of, Thrasher is not only impressive, but he's a blast to paint. There's tons of detail from his



axe to his boots that will keep you painting for hours. Even the base will present a challenge as to how to best portray the molten magma that boils up on its surface. Over all, this is a fantastic model and even though it



with Jim Bertges

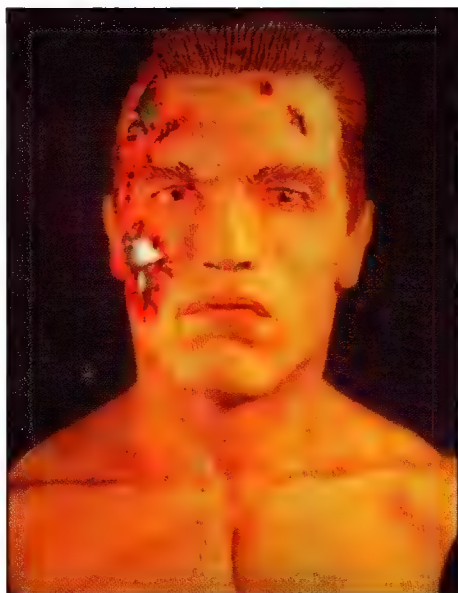
takes some skill to put together, the final result is very much worthwhile. I'm looking forward to seeing more kits from Kickass Studios in the future. You can contact them at Kickass Studios, 1319 Catalpa Lane, Orlando, FL 32806, or visit their web site at www.kickassstudios.com.

Fury Models "Crown of Snakes"

This is an interesting treatment of an unusual subject. Sculpted by George Pelonis, Crown of Snakes depicts the severed head of the Gorgon, Medusa. In Greek mythology Medusa was one of three Gorgon sisters, she had snakes for hair and if a man were to gaze upon her, he would be turned to stone. She was decapitated by Perseus, who looked at her through the reflection in his shield. Although this might appear that it would make an excellent accessory to a Greek warrior kit, at 1/4 scale it is sizable enough to stand on its own. "Crown" is cast as one solid piece of resin and offers the painter a number of possibilities how to render this gruesome bit of mythology. I chose an overall green color scheme with purple shading, however this is one kit that is open to interpretation. To really put this piece in context, it needs a base depicting an ancient Greek temple floor. It would really work nicely if there were a 1/4 scale, sword-wielding, Greek warrior to go along with it. The kit is very reasonably priced at \$20.00 (CA residents please add sales tax; International orders add \$5 per piece for shipping). You can inquire about it at Fury Models, PO Box 574, Los Alamitos, CA 90720-0574.

Eden Small "I'll Be Back"

What can I say about this 5-inch tall, one piece, hollow cast bust of Arnold Schwarzenegger as he appeared in *The Terminator*?



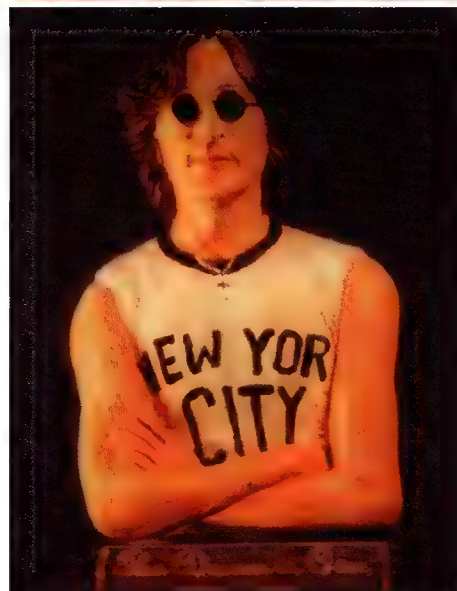
Just this, it's damn near perfect! When I first saw the box art for this bust and then pulled it out for inspection, I was actually wary of trying to paint it. I wasn't sure if I could do justice to this fantastic piece of sculpture. It's not just the likeness that makes this piece so great; it's the incredible skin texture and detail. If this piece wasn't small enough to hold in the palm of my hand, I'd swear it was taken from a life cast of the actor himself. When I finally swallowed my fear of ruining this sculpt with my paintbrush, I discovered that a minimal approach was best. Over a base coat of Krylon Almond spray (yes, the refrigerator color), I did a wash of raw sienna oil paint followed with a light misting of Createx Transparent Light Brown in the hollows and creases and that was all there was to the skin tone. It was simple and very effective. For the wounded areas I used Medea transparent red ink in my Iwata Eclipse and very carefully went over the torn edges of the skin. A little overspray got on to

the skin, but that worked too. After I hand-painted the metallic parts with Testors Chrome, I accented the wounded areas a bit with a touch of Tamiya Clear Red. Everything seemed to come together just right to make painting this beautiful bust an outstanding modeling experience. If you're interested in getting one for yourself, they're \$55 unpainted, including Airmail postage. Contact **Eden Small, 37 Hillcrest Ave., Hurstville NSW 220, Sydney, Australia, Phone (02) 9586 0562.**

Diceman Creations "King of Fools", "Savage", "M", "John Lennon"

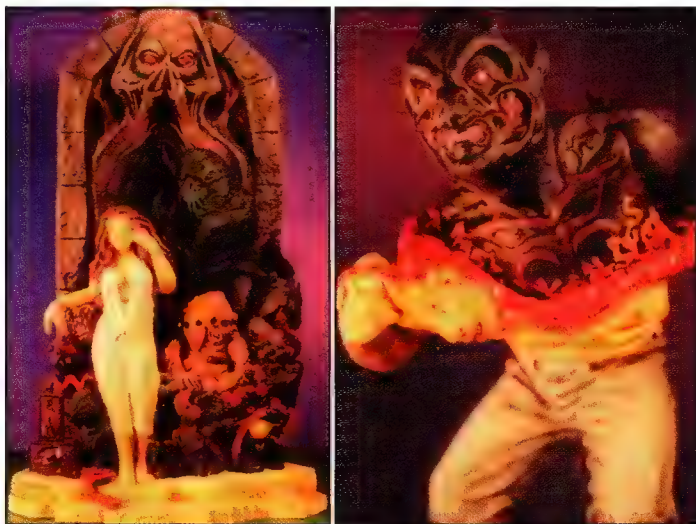
First of all, let me say that Diceman, Ed Bowkley, is one of today's top "Garage Kit" producers. His kits are consistently of high quality, well cast, beautifully sculpted and are of interesting subjects. He is constantly updating his product list, so if you're interested in checking out the latest creations from Diceman visit his website at www.geocities.com/area51/lair/3517/diceman.html and see what tickles your fancy. Now let's get a look at some of Diceman's creations.

King of Fools is one of the best depictions of the Charles Laughton version of Quasimodo cast in resin. Sculptor Ed White has not only captured the likeness of Laughton in his Quasimodo makeup, but he has also mastered Laughton's body language from the role. Quasi sits gargoyle-like clutching the "Crown of Fools" that was bestowed on him by a celebrating crowd. You can see by his expression that Quasi is contemplating his place in the world as he sits on his stone ledge. This is an excellent kit with a lightweight, hollow-cast body; a minimum of putty work where the arms and legs attach and a massive base that represents a ledge of the Notre Dame cathe-



dral beautifully. Speaking of the base, if built properly it can be mounted on a wall, allowing more room on your shelf for other kits. It is necessary to pin the base together due to its sheer weight and size and two-part epoxy cement is probably the best choice for assembly. One little trick I used on this kit involved attaching the "crown" to Quasi's hand. There is such a small attachment point at the top of the hat and the bottom of the hand that I didn't think just gluing or regular pinning would hold it for long. I removed the head from a small wood screw and drilled a small hole for the screw to fit into the top of the hat. It was glued in with the pointy side up. A slightly smaller hole was drilled into Quasi's hand and the hat simply screwed into Quasi's grip and he hasn't dropped it yet.

Savage is the Diceman take on a mightily muscled barbarian with a really big sword. The barbarian himself is cast in one piece and was beautifully



sculpted in a way that resembles the artwork of Simon Bisley or Ken Kelly. He stands on a two-part base and glowers at you in a way that almost says, "You want me to use this sword on you?" There's lots of detail in this guy's fur boots and trunks as well as some excellent musculature to try out your skin-painting techniques on. The only minor quibble I had with this kit was the chunk of resin that formed a dam between the barbarian's arms and his body. It took a fair amount of Dremeling with a conical grinding bit to remove that piece and smooth out the subsequent rough edges. Some detail needed to be restored to the hair as well, but when the kit is finished and displayed, this area isn't really visible at all.

Peter Lorre is probably the least represented "horror" star in the world of Garage Kits. Diceman has taken a step toward remedying this situation with his excellent Peter Lorre bust. The likeness is dead on for the young Lorre in one of his earliest and best film roles. In Fritz Lang's German language film "M" Lorre portrayed a fiendish serial killer who preyed on small children, luring them into dark places with candy and balloons. In the climax of the film, Lorre is marked as the killer by a white chalk M placed on his back. He tries to flee into a crowd, but the white M gives him away and the crowd deals out justice. It's a brilliant and chilling performance that led to a long and distinguished career for Mr. Lorre. This bust is a beautiful and fitting tribute to an under appreciated actor. I hope it will lead to more kits depicting Mr. Lorre in some of his other outstanding roles.

Another excellent likeness is this John Lennon tribute bust that faithfully replicates the famous photo of John Lennon wearing his New York City T-shirt. As a fan of John Lennon and his music, I really appreciate this tribute. The kit is in two parts, the bust itself and a base with a panel inscribed, "The Dream is Over 1940-1980." As with the other Diceman kits, Ed White has done a marvelous job of capturing Lennon's likeness and attitude in his sculpt. The casting of this kit, like the others, was quite well done. There was a small bubble at the end of John's nose, but that was easily taken care of with a little ball of Magic Sculp. It's nice every now and then to depart from the usual monster and fantasy fare in this hobby and tackle a piece like this that pays tribute to someone who made a difference in the world through his music and his life. In addition to the web site noted above, you can contact **Diceman Creations** at **34 Feronia Way, Rutherford, NJ 07070** for pricing and ordering information.

Richard Leach's "Mr. Peel," "Aphrodite"

From the strange and wonderfully twisted mind and talented hands of Richard Leach come two kits for which "unusual" seems a pitifully inadequate descriptive term.

First up is Mr. Peel, a very appropriately named demon who is in the process of shedding his human disguise. When I talked to Richard via e-mail about this kit, he told me that his inspiration for this kit came from the movie *Men In Black* where a very large, cockroach alien was able to hide himself inside a human skin. Richard purposely designed the demon portion of the kit to be larger than the human part, as though the demon is expanding in size as he frees himself of his human skin. Surprisingly, this kit is cast in only three parts: the main body; the right arm, which is peeling off the human head; and the left human hand that dangles behind. The sculpting features Richard's signature style of layers and swirls and is very much up to his usual high standards. The builder is given a myriad of choices to finish this kit; there's a lot of nice, wrinkly human flesh to paint as well as layers of demon skin to attend to. The color choice is really left up to the individual builder. I went for dark blues and purples for my demon, just to see how that contrasted with the pale human flesh he was removing. If you've got a taste for something a little different, this is a kit that will supply just what you need.

Richard's newest offering is a peculiar tableau called *Aphrodite at the Gates of Heaven or Hell*. There is so much going on in this kit that it's best not to try to describe it too much. It's the kind of thing that a person could spend hours studying and wondering about. It's like a dream that combines H.P. Lovecraft with Lewis Carroll, Salvadore Dali and Hieronymous Bosch. Oh, and did I mention that there's a naked lady in there too? Of course I dressed her for the propriety of this magazine. I used facial tissue and diluted white glue to form a simple dress for this goddess. The tissue, when moistened with the glue, became semi-transparent and allowed some of the skin beneath to show through. I had a great deal of fun figuring out how to treat all the intricacies of this kit and I was quite pleased with how the whole thing turned out. Like Mr. Peel, this kit is also surprisingly cast in only three pieces: the "stone" backdrop; the foreground with all the characters; and Aphrodite's right hand. Also like Mr. Peel, this kit will go a long way in supplying you with something different from your usual fare. Richard has also included a little bonus with each of these kits; he's created little, one-inch gargoyles to go with each kit. Collect 'em all! You can contact Richard directly at **8 Spring Royd Terrace, Gillingham, Bradford BD8 0BH, West Yorkshire, UK**, or via e-mail at alys12525@cablenet.co.uk. Richard's kits are also available through his US contact, **Joyz Toyz** at joyz-toyz@home.com.

Dr. One's Lab "Little Red"

From our friends at the Film and TV Model Club and Drone Magazine in England comes a whole range of kits under the umbrella of Dr. One's Lab. These kits are sculpted and produced by members of the club and the proceeds from their sales help fill the club's coffers. The talented Dave Daines sculpted this particular piece, which gives a new twist to the tale of Little Red Riding Hood. Dave has caught Little Red in the throes of transforming from cute girl to big, bad werewolf. The bust is quite nice and gives us werewolf fans plenty to chew on. The casting had a few flaws, but these were mostly air bubbles in the wolf's fur and were easy to take care of with Squadron Green putty thinned with a bit of acetone. Dave has included a lot of little surprises in this sculpt which you will discover as you proceed with your painting. The base or "plinth" was also sculpted by Dave Daines and includes its share of surprises as well. You can contact **Dr. One's Lab** at **9 Grecian Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 2TT, England** or visit Drone magazine's web site at <http://www.dronemagftvmc.com/> and have a look at all the offerings from the Lab.

Estudios "Rosie"

Chris Elizardo is back with a new kit, which was inspired



in part by the Jetson's robot maid, Rosie, at least that's what Chris told me. I guess that's why this robot lady comes equipped with your choice of a big gun or a futuristic feather duster. Rosie is an ambitious kit with arms designed to be assembled in any number of positions. Upon close inspection, I was surprised to find that instead of grabbing a bunch of tank wheels and gizmos from his spare parts box, Chris actually hand sculpted all the mechanical parts on Rosie. Everything turned out quite nicely and Rosie assembles into an impressive mechanical lady. There were some flaws in the casting, most notably in the treads where large air bubbles made it necessary to resculpt some detail with Magic Sculp. The intricate detail found all over Rosie made the

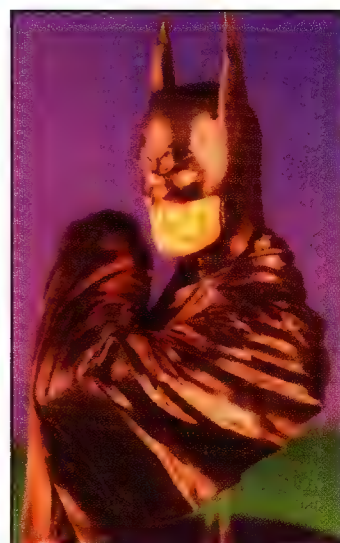
kit a lot of fun to paint. I used a variety of metallics to give her surface a diverse look. Exposed wiring and areas that looked like they should be lit up provided spots where I could add a bit of color without overpowering the robotic look. I had fun with this kit and I'm sure you will as well. You can contact Estudios via e-mail at Elizardo@aol.com for pricing and ordering information.

Mojo Resin "Dark Knight"

Finally we have this impressive, imported bust of a well-known crime fighter from Mojo Resin. I picked this up because I was impressed by the stern facial expression and dramatic pose. The sculpting of the face of this piece is particularly well done and really gives the feel of the mindset of this caped crime fighter. The kit came only with the bust, I had to add the acrylic support rod and small wooden base

myself, but that makes the bust look much better than letting it sit on its angled bottom. When I removed this fellow from his box I was disappointed to find that the tips of his ears had both broken off and the little pieces were nowhere to be found. I had to devise a method of replacing them, but there didn't seem to be enough surface on those skinny little ears to build up any putty. After a bit of brainstorming, I hit upon the perfect idea. I superglued a strip of paper cut to the same width as the ear onto the ear's outside surface. Then I trimmed the paper to a point, following the angle of the existing ear. I put a few drops of glue and a dash of accelerator on the paper and the tip was restored. With just a little careful sanding, the super glue repair was thinned to match the rest of the ear and I went on to the painting. If you're interested in this or any of Mojo's kits, contact MojoResin at: MojoResin, 320 S. Jefferson St., Woodstock, IL 60098-bigkahuna69@hotmail.com

So that's it, twelve kits built and painted in the space of about three weeks, give or take a couple of days here and there. Granted, these are not all contest quality models, but I had fun doing every single one of them and that's the real point of this hobby. Now you'll have to excuse me, I've got another backlog of resin and plastic building up on my workbench and I've got to get to it.



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CLASH of the Monsters!

MODEL BUILDING CREATURES OF *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad*

20



A long-standing popular film with fans of legendary director Ray Harryhausen, *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad* flows with a cavalcade of fantastic creatures. Giant two-headed birds called Roc, the snake woman, a re-animated skeleton warrior, a fire-breathing dragon and the ever-popular man-eating Cyclops. Model builders have eagerly assembled their own versions of these creatures since the film's release in 1958. I've indulged in numerous depictions of the Cyclops and never grow tired of recreating that outlandish movie monster.



with Hilber Graf

you see they are almost identical to any hollow vinyl figure kit. You can cut the parts up, reposition the limbs and re-sculpt with epoxy putty like converting "normal" vinyl models.

I settled upon GEOMETRIC's terrific vinyl Cyclops kit as the Dragon's opponent. Meticulously detailed with optional parts to build either the one horn or two-horned Cyclops, its scale more or less matched the X-Plus Dragon. At a recent kit show I stocked up on closeout, poly-bagged Cyclops kits GEOMETRIC was selling at only \$15 each! Gathering up my "toys" and other materials, I was ready to begin my voyage (Photo 1).

Plotting a Model Building Voyage

Nearly every fantasy model builder I've spoken to have a favorite scene from this classic motion picture. Mine comes at the end of the tale where evil magician Sokurah's Dragon does battle with the Cyclops. It was a match worthy of the World Wrestling Federation.

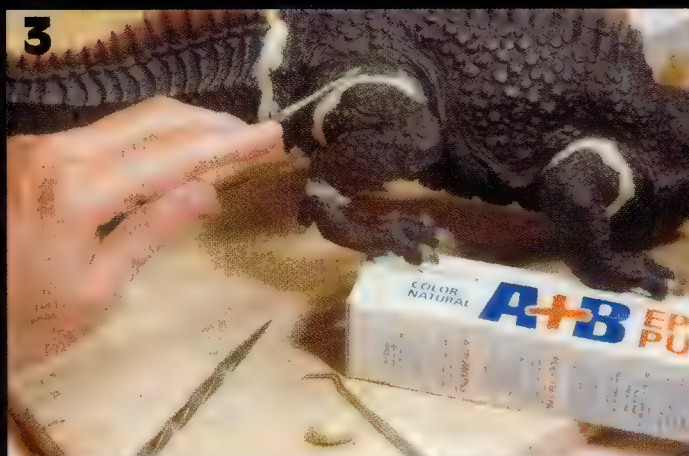
I've seen many licensed and unlicensed miniature depictions of Ray Harryhausen's imaginative creatures over the years. X-Plus USA treated us in 2000 with limited editions of pre-painted Cyclops and Dragon action figures. The many points of joint articulation were great on the Cyclops, but for my taste, the cracked skin texture was heavy-handed and his eyeball seemed sunken, making it only a fair depiction of the monster. On the other hand, their 24-inch long Dragon was awesome. The sculpture appeared almost dead on, with movable legs, neck and jaw. I immediately wanted to use this impressive creature in a diorama.

Which brings me to a "controversy" that has been raging recently. Some so-called "serious" modelers have frequently spoken against using action figures in projects. These are "toys" and don't belong in the model building hobby. Well, excuse me. I look at everything as potential material to achieve an end. Besides, when you disassemble one of these big action figures,

A Voyage in Trivia

Researching for a project can be almost as much fun as building the model. Harryhausen had been a lifelong fan of fantasy and mythology when he announced the production of *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad* on June 20, 1957. Previously, he directed science fiction-based subjects, *20 Million Miles to Earth*, *It Came From Beneath the Sea* and *Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* - all black and white films. Producer Charles Schnee saw the potential in Harryhausen's new project idea and encouraged him to experiment with combining live actors, stop-motion models and process backgrounds on color film stock. The effects wizard spent a year perfecting a process he called *Dynamation*. Harryhausen's finished film became a technical milestone. *Parents* magazine, for example, cited the movie as a "masterpiece of animation" and *The Motion Picture Guide* heralded it as "a rousing tale of adventure and magic". *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad* cost fewer than 1 million dollars to produce and grossed \$6 million in its initial release, making it the sleeper hit of 1958.

Harryhausen, while reluctant to reveal all the



secrets of his new process, explained how certain effects were created. A giant crossbow used to slay the Dragon in the movie's climax was actually a two-foot model matted in with an eight-foot tall wheel the live actors performed in front of. The famous sword fight between a skeleton warrior and Sinbad was first choreographed between actor Kerwin Mathews and a stuntman. Then the actor preformed the duel alone for the camera. Later, Harryhausen animated the miniature skeleton, matching the stuntman's movements, and matted it with Mathews' solo performance. I could go on with trivia for pages, but we have monsters to build!

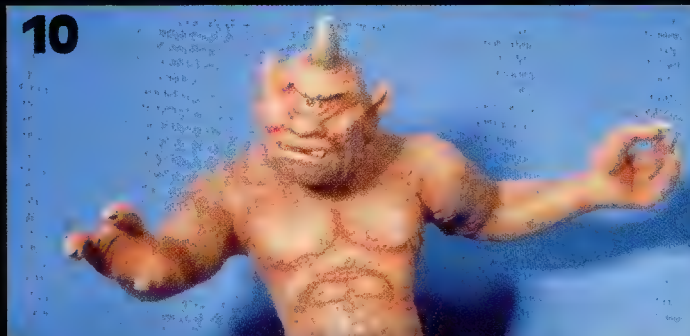
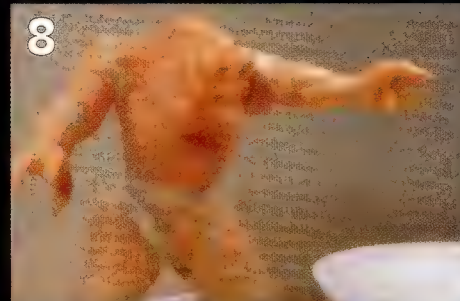
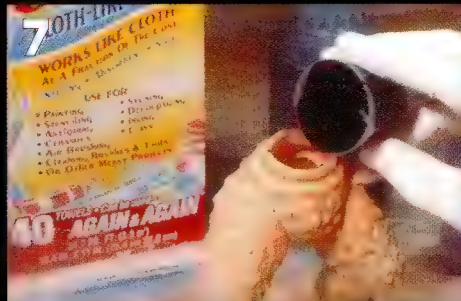
A Dragon By The Tail

I loved the Dragon's sculpture, although there were a couple problems. The paint finish was nicely executed; however the colors on my figure seemed too dark when compared to the vibrant Dragon seen on DVD. This was to be a matter of heated discussion between my friends watching the film one night. Also, all of the feet didn't want to rest flat at the same time when placed on a tabletop or display base.

Most manufacturers recommend modelers reinforce the hollow cavities in vinyl kits before assembly. The reason is vinyl's susceptibility to warping if exposed to heat, like wall heaters or direct sunlight. This reinforcement can be accomplished by pouring plaster or casting resin into the model body cavities, filling with expanding foam resin or cramming crumpled paper inside.

The Dragon was packaged with the tail removed, making it easy to stuff with pieces of wadded up brown paper shopping bags (Photo 2). The thickness of the Dragon's vinyl body probably would have been okay without reinforcement, but I did so as a precaution. My diorama plan required I pose the Cyclops and Dragon in a sort of physical wrestling contact. The big screen battle had Cyclops attempting to take down the giant lizard by grabbing its head. I positioned the neck and head in a twisted manner, as if being tugged, and cut the feet free at the ankles. The feet were then super glued so they rested flat. I then attached the tail and all joints received a bead of Zap-A-Gap to fix them in the desired pose.

Epoxy putty works well for filling seams and re-sculpting details on vinyl figures. Many modelers like Magic Sculp for this procedure, but I'm old-fashioned. I like A/B Epoxy Putty from the H.B. Fuller Company. It's been around and used by modelers for decades, originally intended for plumbing and auto body repairs. It's very smooth in texture, shapes easily with water moistened fingers or tools and takes on sculpted details very well. I prefer it to a similar British product called



Milliput, which is considerably more expensive and rather coarse to work with. All of these products are available at well-stocked hobby stores.

A/B putty was applied to the gaps and joint seams, smoothed out and skin wrinkle details added with a metal scribe (Photo 3). In order for the Dragon's jaw to open and close, the figure was designed with a noticeable gap on the neck. I fixed his mouth open with super glue, and then corrected this area with A/B putty skin (Photo 4). A chain hole on the creature's neck manacle was drilled out for more realism.

Epoxy putty usually sets in a couple hours and can be sanded, drilled or carved a few hours later. A little sanding and the Dragon was ready for the next step. I primed the beast in Black acrylic paint and set him aside to dry (Photo 5).

In This Corner, the Challenger!

I've heard somewhere that Harryhausen cannibalized the animation armature of his Ymir creature from 20 Million Miles to Earth, removed the tail and utilized the body mechanism for his Cyclops. I can't confirm whether this is true or not, but it makes for fascinating movie mythology. An important piece of trivia for modelers to remember is there were two distinct versions of the Cyclops in *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad*. The monster had only a single horn on its head for early scenes in the film, while the unfortunate Cyclops who lost his battle with the Dragon had two horns.

After building so many Cyclops over the years, I'm almost certain I could assemble these brutes blindfolded. Izumi Takabi, who designed it to be posed in different positions after assembly, sculpted GEOmetric's Cyclops. A nice touch that made this vinyl kit very similar to action figures. Unfortunately, this feature leaves glaring joint seams, which must be filled. Large sections of excess material attached to parts are common with vinyl kits. This can be trimmed off with a sharp hobby knife. Heat the parts using a hair dryer or warm water, which makes trimming easier, but **BE CAREFUL** as the knife will slice through vinyl like warm butter (Photo 6). I've been victim to many nasty cuts on my hands. For better balance and support, I poured casting resin into the hollow leg section (Photo 7). This also provided solid limbs to drill

into and attach mounting pins.

Next, came the Cyclops' arms and torso. I posed them so this horned horror grabbed the Dragon's head and prepared to punch it with his left hand. As with the Dragon's body, I puttied all resulting gaps and seams (Photo 8), but didn't bother to re-sculpt the body hair around the waist seam. In the next step I experimented with a cool technique that hid this. After given a coat of acrylic primer, I tested the physical interaction between the combatants (Photo 9).

Fresh Paint and a Haircut, Please

As I mentioned above, the colors of these creatures were a matter of disagreement. In some scenes the Dragon appeared almost Black Green, while in others he was Bright Green. AND it was different between VHS and DVD copies of the movie I watched. My model buddies and I studied both versions side by side and still couldn't agree. Variations in color film print stock, age of the prints and so on probably accounted for this discrepancy. The same goes for the Cyclops, who has often been described as Orange or Light Tan in color, but looks a Caucasian flesh tone on the DVD and color movie stills. Time to deploy my age-old excuse: "artistic license".

My Cyclops was base coated in acrylics, followed by artist's oils for the finish. I liked the way oils were subtly blended for flesh tones (Photo 10). On previous Cyclops projects, I'd simply painted the beast's furry legs. However, I was never quite satisfied with the painted finish and desired a more realistic appearance. Why not use artificial hair instead? Alan Friedman, an award-winning Hollywood make-up artist, explained in great detail how to accomplish this task for *Modeler's Resource* (issues #26 & #28). His articles were fascinating reading and very inspirational.

I didn't pretend to have the professional expertise of Mr. Friedman, so I had to develop a simple way to give my Cyclops hairy legs. The material used here was theatrical crepe hair, available from make-up supply stores or well-stocked costume outlets (Photo 11). It is sold in braided ropes, often about a foot long, and in many natural colors. After untying, the crepe wool is kinky, which can be used as-is if that effect is desired.

Otherwise, you must soak the hair in warm water, then wring it out and air dry flat on a towel. Various glues can be used to attach the hair to your model subject: super glue, contact cement, hot glue, 3M 77 Spray Adhesive, even white craft glue. Experiment on scrap material to see which works best for your project. The main priority is the adhesive must dry clear. You also require a sharp scissors, styling comb and hair spray.

I first painted the fur areas on my Cyclops in brown acrylic that closely matched the crepe hair color. This disguised any areas where I unintentionally applied the crepe too thin. Following Mr. Friedman's advice, I twisted together similar shades of hair, creating three realistic blends. Hair has natural shading, usually starting dark at the back of the head, or in the case of some animals, the lower limbs, gradually becoming lighter toward the top of the head or upper body areas.

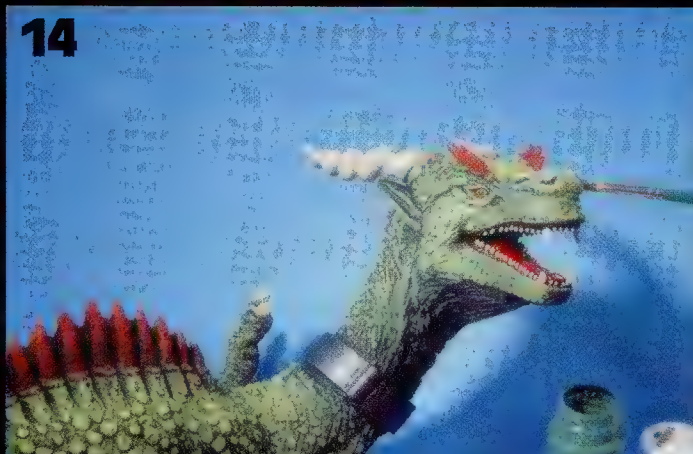
I started by attaching the hair in $\frac{1}{2}$ " long rows, beginning at the Cyclops' hooves and working my way up the legs. With each succeeding row I overlapped the previous row by a $\frac{1}{4}$ " inch. Once this stage was completed I thought the creature looked like he was wearing hairy pants. Hair doesn't really grow in rows, but it helped to cover exposed areas and I would correct the problem later (Photo 12). After a visit to watch a professional hair stylist do her job, I noted the cutting technique and was ready for the next step. When the glue dried, I trimmed off excess hair with a scissors held flat at a 45-degree angle from underneath as it cut. This was time consuming, carefully combing out loose hairs and shaping the fur around the Cyclops' legs. Once satisfied with the appearance, I lightly misted the legs with hairspray to hold everything in place (Photo 13).

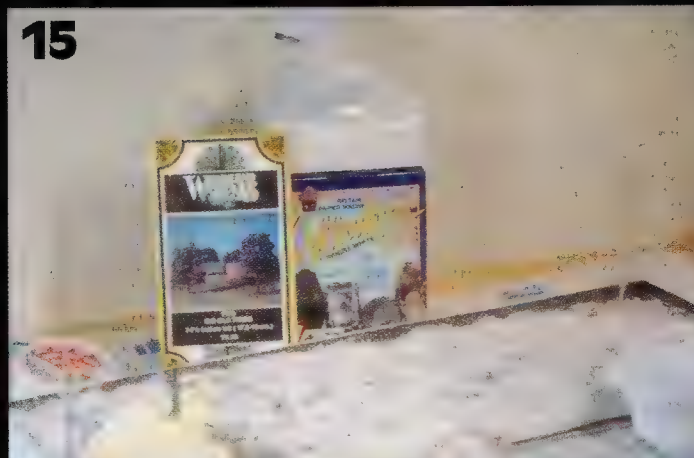
After surviving my Cyclops' hairy ordeal, I gladly embraced a straightforward painting of the Dragon. Since this creature was already primed in Black, I easily dry brushed numerous shades of Green to the monster's upper body (Photo 14). The primer was allowed to act as shading. Various details such as teeth and eyes were then picked out in acrylic colors.

The Wrestling Ring and Final Details

It was now timed to set up the battleground for my combatants. Searching through my pile of scrap lumber, I found a pine board 10"x28" that was just big enough for these huge monster figures. After sanding the rough edges smooth, I glued a $\frac{1}{2}$ " basswood strip on the base's topside to act as a retaining ridge for the groundwork. If the lumber I was using had been of a higher quality, I would have stained and varnished the base. But this was just scrap, so I opted to paint it Black. The addition of a coat of contrasting textured paint graced my cheap base with a stone-like finish.

Rustoleum produces several different shades of textured paint, which can be found at home improvement stores. Masking tape protected edges of the base from damage as I continued to the next step. The monster figures were the center of attention for my diorama and I didn't want an elaborate diorama base to distract the viewer's eyes. Some simple foliage to set the scene was the right touch. Three Woodland Scenics trees, a large one for the background and shorter versions in the foreground, worked well. These were intended for HO model layouts, but the tall tree kits were suitable as small trees in larger scales. A pile of resin cast boulders of my own design were then added for visual texture. Paper mache groundwork was mixed





from CelluClay with just enough water to moisten and a generous addition of white glue. The white glue helped prevent shrinkage as the material dried (Photo 15).

Bare earth was created out of Rock Powder Pigment, a model railroad product from Arizona Rock & Mineral Company (P.O. Box 567, Paulden, AZ 86334-0567). This material was the real thing - Arizona rock pulverized into fine powder. Mixed with white glue and water, it transformed into paint pigment you simply brushed on your groundwork shapes. It dried to a hard shell, retaining a highly realistic soil texture. Rock Powders were available in numerous earth tones ranging from Light Desert Tan to Orange Sandstone. I purchased about 20 pounds of this stuff in various shades many years ago - enough for a lifetime of diorama projects - but you still may be able to locate it at some model railroad shops if the above address is no longer valid. Woodland Scenics provided shredded foam weeds to complete the ground cover (Photo 16).

Surveying the completed diorama base I felt something was missing. The scene still required a sense of scale to compliment my dueling creatures. A human figure in the appropriate scale would confirm the Dragon and Cyclops' huge size. In the movie, the evil magician Sokurah was present at this clash of monsters, albeit at a more discreet distance. Rummaging through my spare parts box, I was able to piece together a suitable representation of Thorin Thatcher, the actor who played the character. Once painted and placed into the scene, my magician set the mood perfectly (Photo 17).

Large dioramas such as this are challenging. Tweaking the design so it doesn't crowd the subject but still manageable for bookshelf display is a

formable obstacle (Photo 18). Staging the action, drama and painting add to the challenge (Photos 19 & 20). Perseverance and patience are the key to a satisfying conclusion for large scale modeling projects.





Buck Rogers in the 25th Century **STARFIGHTER**

Welcome to the first Kit Girl article! What I plan to offer you as a regular feature are rare and unusual kits. And like you, I buy my kits. I will not only give you instructions on how to build the kit I'm featuring, but will provide history on the show it came from and interviews with people who build and super-kit their models...and any tips I can squeeze out of them. So I am a hobby builder and your modeling industry liaison out here in Hollywood...and it does get strange.

What I'm doing here is a buildup of a 1:1 studio scale resin kit of the Starfighter, which was also known as the Thunderfighter, from the "Buck Rogers in the 25th Century" Movie and TV series from 1979-81.

Buck Rogers History:

In August 1928 in an issue of "Amazing Stories," a novelette titled, "Armageddon-2419" made its debut giving birth to one of the most important characters in the history of Science Fiction: Anthony "Buck" Rogers. Edward Elmer Smith was the original creator (the story being the first installment of "The Skylark of Space"), but "Amazing Heroes" gave all the credit to Philip Francis Nowlan. What is interesting about this story is that it accurately described many inventions before they existed: the jet plane, walkie-talkies in combat, the bazooka and the infrared ray gun for fighting at night.

In 1929 "Buck Rogers in the 25th Century" appeared as a comic strip in the daily newspapers. This created a new sensation as millions of people read the continuing adventures of Buck Rogers, Wilma Deering, Dr. Huer, Killer Kane and their cohorts.

The daily adventures on the radio further entertained audiences. In the late thirties the strip declined due to Flash Gordon and other imitators.

In 1939 Buster Crabbe was cast as Buck in the serial film series with nearly the same success. In both media Buck slept for 500 years until Wilma finds him in the 25th Century.

The serial was re-released in an edited version in 1953 as "Planet Outlaws" for theatrical release, and in 1965 as "Destination Saturn" for television.

In 1950-51 the Buck Rogers TV Series premiered.

Continued Next Page





Buck Rogers in the 25th Century **STARFIGHTER**

Continued from page 41

This was the first attempt to bring Buck to television, but they were limited to only a few cheesy sets. First Kem Dibbs, then Robert Pastene played Buck. There aren't any surviving kinescopes, so this first Buck Rogers TV show is only but a memory today.

But then on March 30, 1979, more than 50 years after his first appearance, Buck reappeared in the movie theater.

"The year is 1987, and NASA launches the last of America's deep space probes. In a freak mishap, Ranger 3 and its pilot, Captain William 'Buck' Rogers, are blown out of their trajectory into an orbit which freezes his life support systems and returns Buck Rogers to Earth 500 years later."

It's the 25th Century and Earth is now in danger from the sinister Draconians led by Princess Ardala. Together with Colonel Wilma Deering and his faithful robot Twiki, Buck Rogers defends the Earth from Ardala's evil schemes...

On September 20 of the same year, "Buck Rogers in the 25th Century" movie was aired on NBC as the pilot for the originally intended TV series.

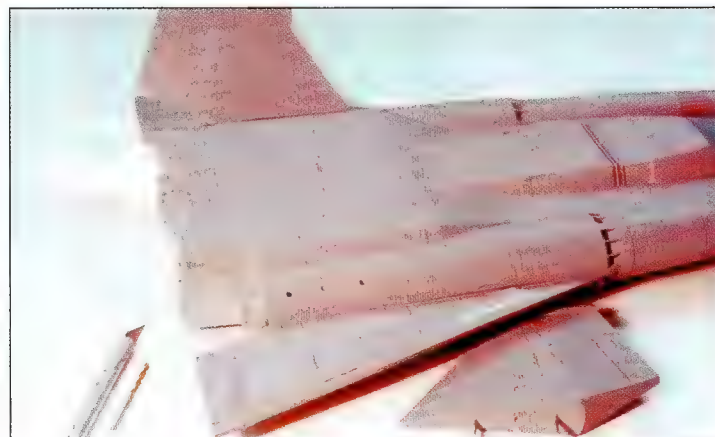
In 2491, Buck is woken from his long slumber only to find out that Earth has survived a nuclear holocaust, and is terrorized by an alien race. Dr. Elias Huer leads the Earth's Defense Force Directorate. Colonel Wilma Deering leads the fighter squadron to which Buck is assigned because of his piloting skills. New Friends such as Twiki (Mel Blanc's voice) the robot and Dr. Theo (polis) join Buck.

The show was special effects driven. Imagine what the effects wizards had to go through before the technology of today! I loved the show, especially when they'd fly the Starfighters with their dogfights and spectacular explosions.

Gil Gerard starred as Buck. Yeah, handsome, but give me that STARFIGHTER and Queen Ardala's clothes!! Yeah, I wanted to be like Wilma, but have Ardala's clothes. Um, dad said no to the "jewelry that functioned as clothes," and the Monogram kit was too small for my liking. I couldn't locate a large enough model of the Starfighter...until now.

Studio Model:

Universal Studios made the patterns for miniature



Buck Rogers in the 25th Century **STARFIGHTER**

filming. Back in those days they made it out of wood and styrene parts that were later molded in RTV (Silicone rubber) molds, and then cast up in either foam or hard resin. Currently, the original pattern is in the possession of Hollywood Props.

This 1:1 scale Starfighter kit is very unique in that it has never existed until the middle of last year, 2001. It is a bonafide copy off of the studio miniature; that's then been cleaned up extensively and beautifully. I found it through a private connection, so I have no idea how many of these exist.

Starfighter Specs:

Length - 22.5"

Width @ wingtips - 12.875"

Height at maximum - 5.5"

Number of parts:

- o Resin - 6
- o Clear vacu-form - 1
- o Decals - 1 sheet (detailed)
- o Build-up photos - 2
- o Instructions - 1

Cost: \$350.00

To start this project, I acquired a very limited copy of this miniature as a solid resin assembly kit. I also spent time on the Internet to find the original Buck Rogers poster booklet, which features two really good photos of the top and back of the original hero filming miniatures. These are the only known approved studio pictures. NOTE: the 3rd and 4th pictures are taken from that collector poster booklet.

After I greedily ripped apart the outer shipping container, I opened the lid with my fingers crossed. I was shocked. Straight out of the box, the kit is impressive! It had very nice packaging and all the parts were clean, with little to no flashing or seam lines. The parts included: the main body, which was nice and straight; the vacuum-formed canopy; the cockpit cover; the twin pod engines; both lower winglets, which were very straight; a thorough instruction sheet; and magnificent waterslide decals!

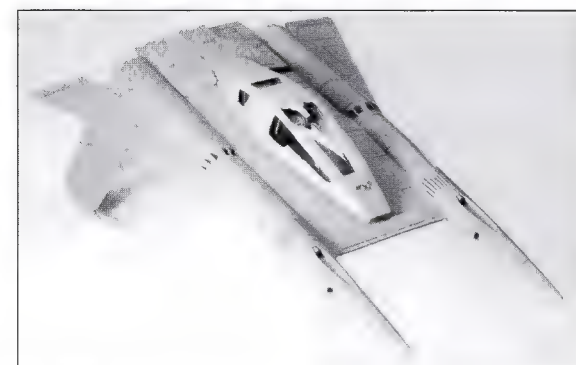
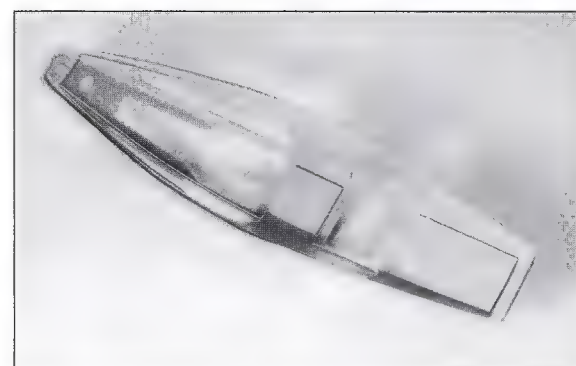
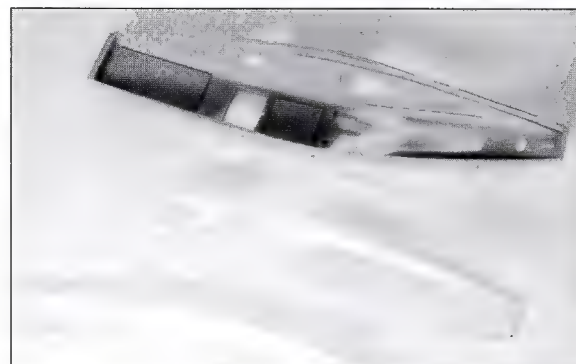
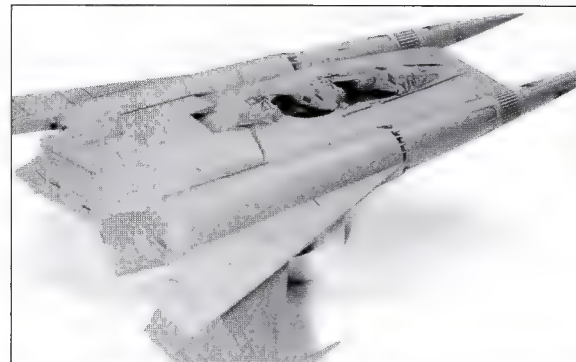
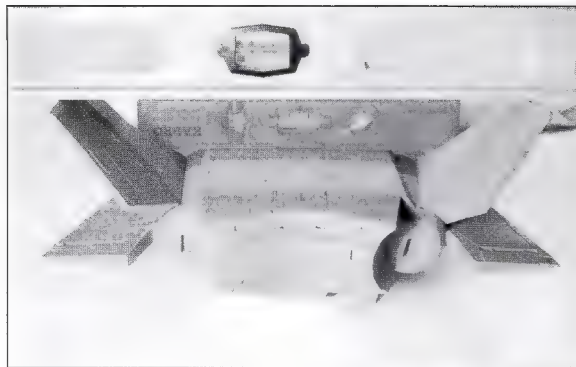
Side note:

A rare opportunity came about when a friend visited and showed me a recently finished Buck Rogers' pilot, which was in scale with the replica. Industry artisan Gene Kozicki crafted it. This tiny Buck may actually wind up in one of these buildups, should it ever be cast. For comparison sake, it is featured here as a companion piece to this kit buildup.

First, after cleaning up the kit parts with a mild dish detergent to remove all the leftover mold release, were the holes for the winglets. This kit comes with brass pins in the winglets, as well as indicator holes for them, keyed for both the left and right sides.

Lay the main body on it's back. Once the winglets are lightly tacked on with cyanoacrylate, they have to be aligned. To do this you need a dual set of levels, one for the belly of the body and one longer level laid across the bottom edges of the winglets. Line them up, then glue and carefully seam the winglets.

The next priority, according to the kit instructions, is to carefully mask off the interior cockpit and paint the seats, side pads and instrument console. Mostly the interior works out to be a myriad of flat blacks with silver rub and buff highlight touches here and there. The canopy glass had to be cut out from the vacuum-



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Posthumous Productions...

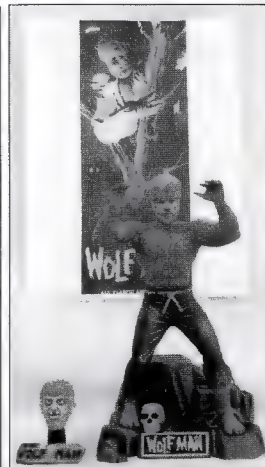
has just released some new products that they asked us to tell you about!

Likeness #8, The Mummy is sculpted by David M. Grant and is once again a likeness of Lon Chaney, Jr. The head is designed to replace the original Aurora head. SRP is \$10.00 each, s/h included. Add \$5.00 for corresponding nameplate Aurora Shoulda Made.

The official Posthumous Productions' kit, the Grim Rocker, has finally made it out! This 1:7 scale (approx. 10½" tall) cool and gashly mascot is clad in blue jeans, T-shirt, combat boots and a skull-studded leather jacket. Also included are instructions to create different hairstyles from traditional, to punk. The Rocker stands on a graveyard base with a tombstone-style nameplate sinisterly beckoning you into his world, while grasping his favorite instrument, a scythe-style base guitar (approx. 11½" tall). Sculpted by Nick DeAngelo, with a suggested retail price of \$75.00 plus \$7.00 s/h.

Likeness #7 (bottom row, right), The Wolfman is also sculpted by Grant in the Lon Chaney, Jr. likeness. This, like the other "Likeness Heads" replaces the original that comes with the Aurora/Polar Lights kit. SRP is also \$10.00, s/h included and add \$5.00 for the corresponding nameplate that Aurora Shoulda Made.

Like some more information or would you like to purchase one of these pieces? Checks or money orders should be made payable to: John Appgar, PO Box 59, Flanders, NJ 07836

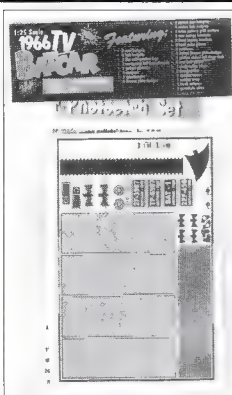


Batcar Decals...

Here's a package of 1:25 scale, 1966 Batcar Decal & Photoetched Detail Sets.

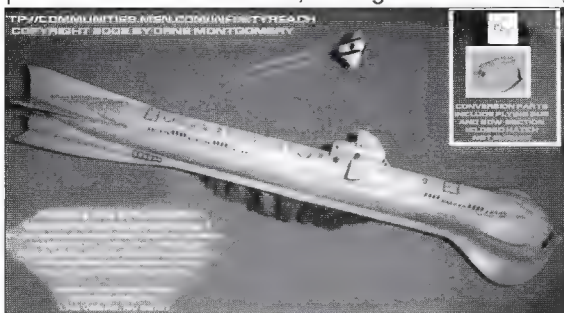
This set is loaded with everything you need to detail your favorite crime fighting vehicle! Includes door and hub insignias, fire extinguisher logo, emergency bat turn placards, gadget placards, compass, speedometer, license plate designs and literally, a TON of other emblems and insignias.

Interested? Cost is \$22.00 s/h included in the US and \$24.00 s/h included elsewhere. Contact these folks at: batmanwest@aol.com



Rebellion Creations...

is offering their own Seaview Conversion kit, with four window bow section, with open hangar bay. Scale Flying Sub with closed hatch piece included. Fits Aurora, Monogram and Polar Lights issues of the



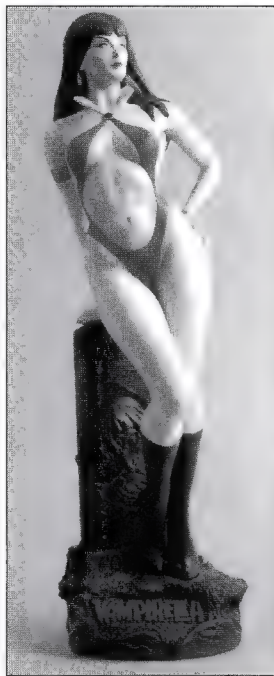
Seaview. Rebellion Creations, 531 Bedford Rd., Las Vegas NV 89107 or send e-mail to: rebellion@coam.net

Smooth Curves...

Who doesn't enjoy the beauty of the female form?

Here's a new one from William Pacquet that he sculpted in 1/6 scale and includes four parts.

Kit retails for \$120.00 & \$8.00 s/h and can be purchased from: Earthbound Studios, PO Box 1833, Battle Ground WA 98604 Tel: 360.263.8535





N & T Productions...

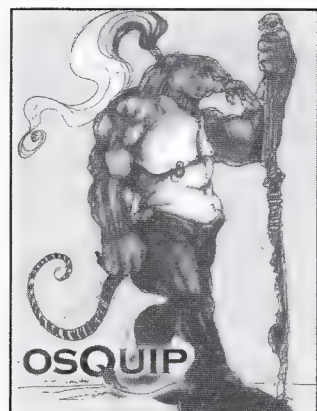
New Lord Of The Rings figure from N+ T Productions. MORIA ORC - Stands approx. 12 ins tall - Officially Licensed ONLY 500 WORLDWIDE. Retail £90 (approx. \$125) PAINTED and Retail £60 (approx. \$85) as a KIT. Both prices plus postage.

In our last issue, we inadvertently gave the wrong address info for the N & T Joker kit that we highlighted. That kit stands 14 ins tall and retails at £90 (approx. \$130) PAINTED and £60 (approx. \$90) as a KIT.

Lastly, shown below is THE NAKED CAT - She stands approx. 11 ins tall. Retail at £80 (approx. \$112) PAINTED or £50 (approx. \$70) as a KIT. This kit contains semi-nudity.

Contact them at: **N&T Productions, 19 Marina Drive, South Shields, Tyne & Wear NE33 2NH ENGLAND** and their Fax: **+44 191 45 63 741** or on the 'Net at: <http://www.nt-productions.com/orders.htm>.

You'll want to check out their full line of kits and busts!

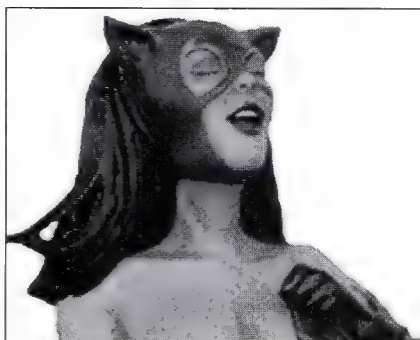


Jesus Pastore...

presents a new model kit, called "Osquip," a kit, as you can see from the drawing, of an original design.

For more information on this particular model, contact: **Jesus Pastore, CCS: 6029, PO Box 0253323, Miami FL 33102-5323** or reach them via the Internet:

www.jesuspastore.com
jpastore@cantv.net

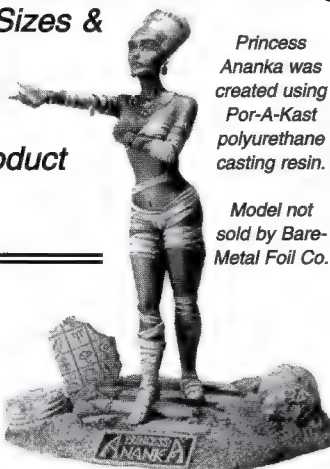


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Princess Ananka was created using Por-A-Kast polyurethane casting resin.

Model not sold by Bare-Metal Foil Co.

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Fax: 248.476.3343

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The NEXT contest is underway now and you've got until September 1, 2002 to get your pictures into us.

There will be *two categories*:

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 10 lbs of Magic Sculp

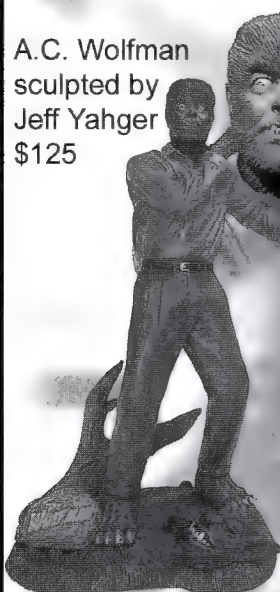
Jimmy Verbeeck from Belgium
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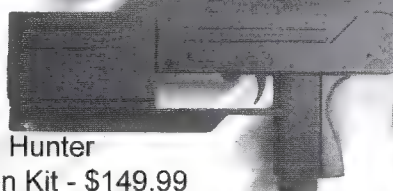
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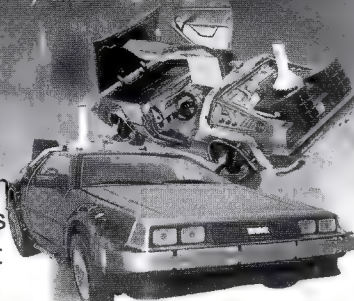
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We have listed just the basics concerning our ad rates here for you, but prior to advertising, you'll need to get a copy of our full **Ad Rate/Spec sheet (rev 03/01/02, and complete an Insertion Order)**, which has all the details that you'll need to know before you advertise. With our timeliness and promptness, you'll know exactly when you'll be seeing your next ad hit the stands! Enhance your business! Advertise in MR!

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Apr/May	Jan 15	1st Wk of Mar
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Playboy Fashion Dolls is a line of anatomically correct replicas of the very Playmates who have graced the pages of one of the world's most popular magazines for the last five decades.

The over-sized Playboy Dolls will not only possess a smooth, life-like outer layer of "skin" with no visible joints, but will also be engineered to have ground-breaking fluidity in motion—creating a unique sense that the doll truly is a miniature of a famous Playmate celebrity. Each Playmate Doll will be encased in a unique environment created specifically for that Playmate. There will also be a variety of accessories with each doll, including several layers of clothing, multiple lingerie, shoes, jewelry AND a numbered certificate of authenticity.

Four Playmate Fashion Dolls will be offered each calendar year. Two will be released in a limited production run every six months to keep the inventories fresh for the rabid collector's market.

Karen McDougal
\$49.99 avail. April 02



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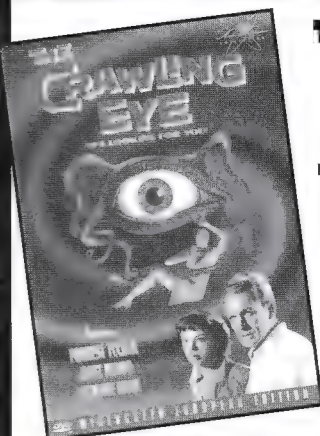


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Presentation**

GAMERA

THE SIGHTS & SOUNDS OF MODELING!

by **Bill Craft**
with special assistance from **Leslie Rivera**



THE CRAWLING EYE

Image Entertainment

I just love old "B" monster movies. This one is no exception. Made way back in 1958, "The Crawling Eye" has it all. From just the title alone, you know you're in for a ride down memory lane.

Forest Tucker is our hero who must solve the mystery of strange goings on in the Swiss Alps.

Giant, one-eyed-multi tentacled creatures from outer space are the main menace here.

Cheesy special effects are in store all over the place as giant eye creatures menace our cast.

Presented in its original theatrical aspect ratio, the print is pretty good. There is only a trailer as far as extras are concerned.

A few kits have graced the scene on this film's outer space bug-eyed beasts.

This is a cheaply priced disk and I would hope so. Like I said before, this is just one of those films from the golden age of science fiction that tries as hard as it can to take itself seriously.

For die-hards of the genre only. Like myself.



JURASSIC PARK III

Universal

Okay, so I'm a bit late on this one. I am one of those who really hate those who try to use logic when it comes to these type of films. It's a FANTASY film, people! It's not a documentary.

Alright, I feel better now! Running just a minute or two over 90 minutes, this third

installment in the "J.P." series certainly delivers the goods. After we get the inconsequential people introduced and they get to dino island, we can then set back and enjoy the whole scream, munch and run theme of this film.

Naturally this disk is packed full of goodies. It will definitely take you a bit of time to get through it all. Everything you wanted to know about this film is here.

The film is presented in widescreen and 5.1 surround for all that big dino growling and thumping around. Especially the fight between the Spineosaur and our ol' buddy T-Rex!

Dinosaur kits have always been popular with modelers, but it escapes me why nobody has done a Spineosaur. Perhaps the dinosaur police at Universal are on the prowl for any hardened criminal sculptors who would dare sculpt one without a license.

MAD MAX

MGM Home Entertainment

Now this is a disk that truly helps makes you understand the wonders of what DVDs are all about.

For the first time ever, we have the original Australian, widescreen version of "Mad Max" with Mel Gibson's own voice.

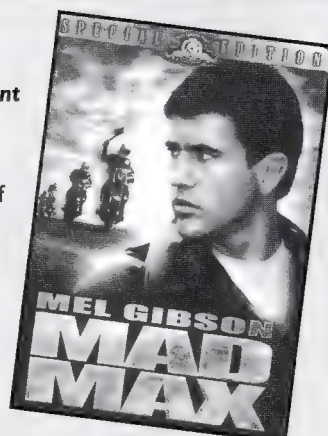
For those of you who are unaware, Mel's voice was dubbed for the American release citing that it sounded too foreign. HUH?

The film is also presented in 5.1 surround. Beautiful transfer. It's like watching the film all over again for the first time.

The disk is full of extra goodies, including trailers, documentaries and audio commentaries.

Kits of Mad Max as well as action figures from the sequel "The Road Warrior," are all over the place. He's one of those popular characters that never seems to die out.

I say that you guys cannot live without this disk in your collection. Too bad Mel became so big and unaffordable to continue the series.



THE ELEPHANT MAN

Paramount Home Video

In the "it's about time it came out category," we have the magnificent film, "The Elephant Man."

Even I still get a little misty-eyed when I watch this film.

John Hurt portrays the title role of "The Elephant Man," while Anthony Hopkins portrays the caring doctor trying to give him a bit of dignity from a life filled with prejudice and ignorance.

The film is based on the actual life of its central character, John Merrick, who was born at a time when the "freak" shows were starting to become unpopular with the authorities and people alike.

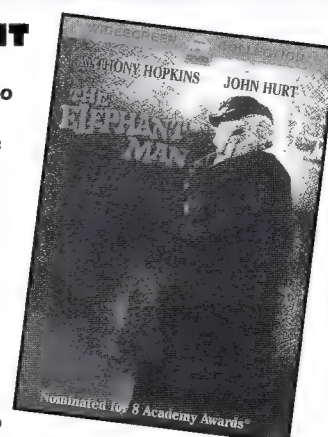
The film looks and sounds wonderful. There are interviews, trailers and photo galleries as well as the most fascinating part of the disk, full color shots of the makeup.

For those of you who may not know, the film was shot in black and white.

There have been a few wonderful kits based on this film's character.

This is not a monster movie folks, so those of you who have not seen it before must look elsewhere for that kind of thing.

This disk is a great addition to anyone's collection.



PROPHECY

Paramount Home Video

This is one of those films that has taken a lot of heat over the years. Nobody has anything good to say about it except me.

I dunno what else a monster movie fan would want out of a film like this. All the essential grisly deaths are there as well as a seemingly unstoppable creature who is hell-bent on killing everyone it come in contact with.

There is also the classic cat and mouse scenarios.

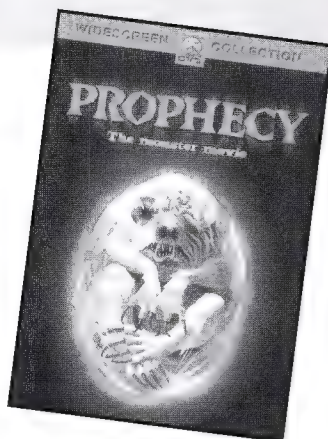
Presented in its original theatrical release format, "Prophecy," is definitely worth another look for you non-believers.

The film was directed by John Frankenheimer and stars Robert Foxworth and Talia Shire. The film also boasts an excellent monster music score by composer Leonard Rosenman.

I gave high marks for Paramount's DVD of "The Elephant Man," but this one has absolutely nothing in the way of extra material. Not even a trailer!

Only one kit that I am aware of has been produced on this film's main creature.

Maybe rent this first. I don't want to be responsible for lost greenbacks if you still hate it.



MIDNITE MOVIES

MGM Home Entertainment

For the budget consciousness in us all, you can't go wrong with MGM's Midnite Movies series.

You can find these DVDs for around ten bucks each.

Granted, most of these films are rock bottom budget films from the old American International Pictures archives, but if you like "B" monster movies like I do, then these will be sure to stimulate your senses.

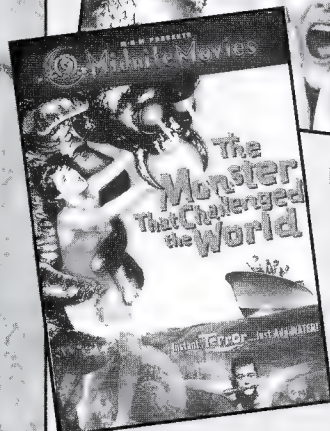
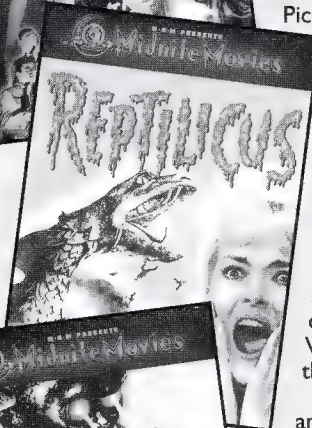
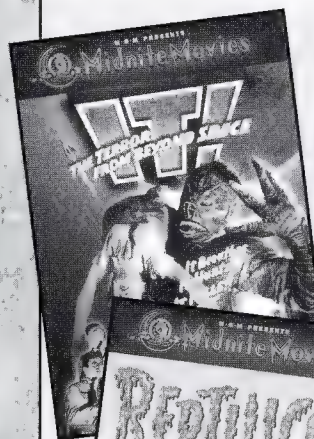
Most of the disks offer a trailer from the film, while others offer you nothing but the simple satisfaction of viewing the feature.

All of these films are presented in their correct aspect ratio and the picture quality is vastly superior to any VHS tape you may have on them.

Awesome films like "Pit and The Pendulum" and "Fall of the House of Usher" have already been released. The two "Dr. Phibes" films are out there.

A virtual army of model kits have spawned from these films with new ones being created everyday.

Love em' or hate em', they will continue to be with us for a very long time. Long live the "B" movie monster!



DAY OF THE DEAD

Composed by
John Harrison
www.numenoreanmusic.com

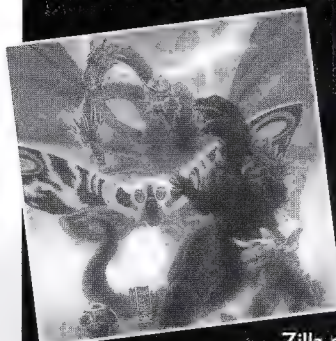
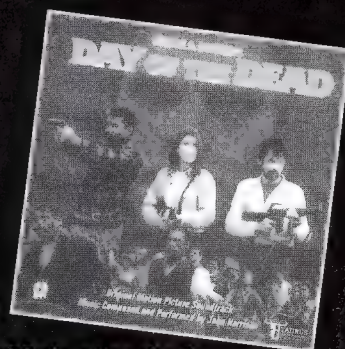
Finally! Now I can toss my bootleg in the trash.

The third installment in the "Dead" series by George Romero, pits a disfunctional group of surviving humans, who must seek shelter in an underground bunker, against an army of flesh-eating ghouls.

This is one of those scores that kinda grows on you with repeated listening. This is excellent zombie music. You really get the feeling of being underground while listening to the main themes. And of course the music for the onslaught of zombie mayhem is really cool.

Also included on the disk is what they call bonus music and effects tracks. Basically it is certain scenes with music and background noise, but without any dialog except for the moaning of zombies.

This is a limited edition disk with a pressing of just 3000, so if you want it, you better get it soon!



GMK GODZILLA, MOTHRA & KING GHIDORAH: GIANT MONSTERS ALL-OUT ATTACK! Composed by Kow Otani IMPORT

Ah so! Another Zilla epic!

This film sports a new look for

Zilla and completely returns him to the role of the really bad monster. Other monsters must try and stop him before Japan is destroyed yet again! King Ghidorah is one of the good monsters this time.

A new Zilla looks demands new music and that is precisely what we have here. Kow Otani gives us a more electronic sound for the score and leaves behind the classic themes of yesteryear. I found the whole cd refreshing, but I still like the older music.

This cd, being an import, is a bit pricey. Hopefully a U.S. release is not far behind.

MONSTERS & HEROES

Zip Caplan
and a Cast of Thousands
www.zipcaplan.com

Speaking of refreshing, this is an interesting cd. Zip Caplan has taken some of the classic film themes of the bygone days and instead of retreading them, he has recorded them with rock instruments.

I know what you're thinking here, but this is a really cool cd. Being a genre soundtrack hound, I will gladly place this one amongst my collection.

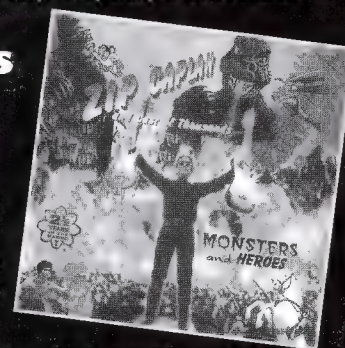
From such classics as "The Bride of Frankenstein" and "King Kong," to "Godzilla," "The Lone Ranger" and "Enter the Dragon," this is truly a fun collection of themes.

Even though I am a purist listener at times when it comes to this kind of thing, I could not help but be impressed.

Zip's renditions still maintain the mood, whether it be horror, science fiction or action.

I can tell that this guy and his "cast of thousands" really likes what they're doing here.

About 50 minutes of listening delight awaits. What do you have to lose? Check it out.



SHOWtime!

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• MAY 2002 •

• **Hoosier Model Car Swap Meet & Model Contest:** May 4, 2002, at the St. Roch Religious Education Center, 3600 South Pennsylvania St, Indianapolis IN from 9AM to 4PM. Tables: \$25.00. Admission: \$2.00. For information, send a SASE to: HMCA, 1019 N. Tuxedo St, Indianapolis IN 46201 or call 317.264.9387 evenings/weekends and leave a message.

• **THE 7th ANNUAL VERONA MODEL SHOW & CONTEST:** May 18, 2002, at Verona Middle School, Hwy M, Verona, WI. This year's theme is the '70s. Anything to do with the disco decade is eligible. For more information, please contact: **Jim Turek, 2639 Country View Ct., Monroe, WI 53566** E-mail: jjtmodel@yahoo.com • Tel: 608.329.7222

• JUNE •

• **Asian Film Fantasy Expo 3:** will be invading the New York City area on June 15 & 16 at the Holiday Inn & Conference Center in Saddle Brook, New Jersey. As with our previous shows, AFPE 3 will feature film screenings, event exclusive items, a jam-packed dealer's room, model kit building seminars and the Super Hobby Model Challenge 3 model contest. Check out the official AFPE web site at: <http://www.daikaiju.com/afpe> for details, or call (201) 461-9318.

• AUGUST •

• **OzCon 2002:** hosted by Emerald City Modelers, IPMS, Saturday, August 10, 2002, from 9AM. OzCon 2002 will be held at the Cessna Activity Center, 2744 George Washington Blvd, Wichita, KS. Show includes a Model and Wargaming Miniatures Contest, with over 40 categories. Special category: 2002: A Space Oddity. Also included are games and vendors. For more information, contact: Emerald City Modelers, Tel: 316.687.1814 or visit them on the 'Net at: www.home.earthlink.net/~tcdowen

• SEPTEMBER •

• **THE INTERNATIONAL MODEL & HOBBY EXPO (RCHTA):** The largest Model and Hobby Show in North America, opens exclusively for trade September 5th and 6th, 2002. The doors open to the public September 7th and 8th, 2002. There will be nearly 400 exhibitors from 38 countries stretched across 225,000 square feet. More than 50% of the distributors from this year's show were from outside the United States; this makes an important statement about the significance of this show. The show will commence at Donald E. Stephen's Convention Center in Rosemont, Illinois. For more information please contact: **Mary S. DeBaggis, msdebaggis@ihobbyexpo.com, RCHTA, 31632 North Ellis Drive, Unit 111, Volo, IL 60073, Phone: 847-740-1111, Fax: 847-740-1112.**

• NOVEMBER •

• **Cleveland Model Show 6:** The International Plastic Modeler's Society Western Reserve and John H. Glenn Chapters invite you to join them on Saturday, November 2, 2002 at Kirtland High School in Kirtland, OH. Contest with 40 regular and 5 open categories. For additional information, please contact Contest Chairman, Doug Halke, 4967 Garrett Dr., North Ridgeville, OH 44039, Tel: 440.327.0165 or E-mail: DHalke@loraincounty.net. For vendor information, contact, John Vitkus, 3323 Maynard Rd., Shaker Heights, OH 44122, Tel: 216.751.2224 or E-mail: vitkusj@aol.com

• MAY 2003 •

• **Drone-A-Rama:** Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, May 23 - 26, 2003, at Gateway Hotel Nottingham. Event will begin on Friday and the model show will take place on Saturday, the auction will occur on Sunday and Monday is pack-up time. Special guests are planning from the world of British TeleFantasy.

DOWN THE PREHISTORIC TRAIL



with Mike Fredericks



Sean Cooper's Paleocraft Magic!

www.paleocraft.com

I'll get right to the point Sean. Do you exclusively sculpt prehistoric mammals?

"The truth is that I don't exclusively sculpt prehistoric mammals; most people have only been exposed to the mammal sculptures I currently have in production. I love to sculpt a wide variety of subjects and genres, of course the prehistoric but also figurative, wildlife, fantasy, historical and science fiction subjects to name a few. In fact, when I first started sculpting prehistoric animals it was mostly dinosaurs. You'll notice that the Paleocraft logo I created when I first started doing prehistoric subjects consists of a pleisiosaur rather than a sabertooth or some other mammal.

"When I became interested in reproducing my sculptures for sale, I noticed that there were many talented artists already sculpting and reproducing really good dinosaurs. Simply put, being new to the field I didn't want to compete with some of the superb dinosaur works that were already out there. Noticing that there were few reproductions of prehistoric mammals, which I find every bit as fascinating as the dinosaurs, I decided to focus on them, at least for the time being. I wasn't sure how well prehistoric mammals would go over within the model building-community but they have proven to be popular and well received. After the success of my first two models, the Indricotherium and Woolly Rhinoceros, I decided to stick with it and continue to focus on the prehistoric mammals. So far I haven't regretted it; I'm not getting rich, but I do enjoy it."

Please tell us how and when you got started?

"In some form or another I've always been involved with art. Dinosaurs, animals and fantastical creatures have always interested me for as long as I can remember and as a child, my first artistic attempts were of such. My family has always been nature oriented and managed to instill in me at a young age a sense of respect and wonderment for the natural world. They've always encouraged my interests and pursuits both artistically and academically. An appreciation for art and wildlife both extant and extinct, made paleo-art a natural area to explore. I've only been actively involved in the "paleo-scene" for a couple years now; it's been rewarding and I intend to continue. Most of my training has been in two-dimensional areas with an emphasis in the commercial arts, graphic design and illustration. In fact, I've never taken a class or course that specifically focused on sculpting.

"Almost all the techniques I use are learned through trial and error, from reading books about sculpting, or from simply viewing the works of other artists. Ultimately, I believe the key to sculpting well is the ability to draw well. I started by displaying some of my earlier sculptures on the internet and then in a few publications. From there I became involved with Mike Evan's The Alchemy Works and then started actively reproducing my prehistoric sculptures. From that I started advertising and eventually developed a website that seems to grow faster than I can keep up with."





Once you've picked a subject, how do you go about sculpting it?

"Once I've picked a subject, the first thing I do is research. You can never do enough research or have enough reference material. I have a fairly large supply of reference material including dinosaur books, prehistoric mammal books and lots of modern wildlife books. I also have the National Geographic CD-Rom as well as original issues dating back to the sixties and I have 20 years' worth of National & International Wildlife Magazines stacked up in the garage. Wildlife photographs come in really handy for doing the mammals.

"These days I find that the internet is probably the best reference tool. If you can't find what you're looking for, you can contact someone who can. The most important thing I look for are good skeletal pictures. I always refer to other artist reconstructions, but ultimately like to reconstruct the subject myself from the skeleton up.

"Once I have adequate reference material and have a vision of how I might like the subject to look, I determine a scale and go about creating an armature. This is where a good profile of the skeleton really helps out. I'll scan the skeletal pic into the computer and create a template by using a scale tool in one of my design programs to make it larger or smaller to fit my need. From there I take a print-out, lay it flat and trace a pattern on another piece of paper for the armature. For the bulk of a body I usually cut a block of wood to fit with a band saw and, if needed, bulk it out with tinfoil. I use 1/162 wire (whatever that is in wire gauge) for the extremities and then wrap that with a thin craft wire to give the clay something to adhere to. Sometimes the armatures are more elaborate. For example, if the subject has an open mouth, I tend to spend more time actually making a detailed skull with a lower jaw complete with teeth and tongue as seen in my *Dinohyus* model and some of the sabertooths as well. Also, if the finished piece is going to be segmented, like a leg or other body part that needs to be made separate for casting purposes, the armature tends to be more complicated. Usually I keep them simple.

"The next thing is to determine a pose which is not always easy and tends to change frequently in the beginning stages. I try to find a pose that is both interesting and natural while at the same time illustrates the subject's unique features. Some inevitably are better than others. Once the pose is determined I go about adding the clay; I prefer and almost always use Super Sculpey. The first layer gives the sculpture its form and is very reminiscent of the models that taxidermists use before adding the skin and hide. The second layer is where I add the musculature and all the shapely details such as nose, ears and such before finally doing the detailed texturing prior to baking. Most of my sculptures can be viewed in progress on my website in the "IN THE WORKS" section at: www.paleocraft.com/inthe-works.html.

"When sculpting I have three or four favorite tools I like

to use. I try and keep up with modeling magazines like *Modeler's Resource*® for new and innovated techniques and tools, but always find myself coming back to the same ones. Two of the tools I frequently use are store-bought and the other two are homemade. For shaping, I use a flat wooden tool similar to a butter knife and one I made by hammering a nail flat and inserting it into a dowel rod. For detail and texturing I use a wooden tool with two different sized, round ends and another homemade job consisting of a curved stick pin inserted into an old paint brush handle."

About how long does a sculpture take?

"Once I've gone through the research phase and armature stage, the actual sculpting doesn't take long. It depends on the sculpture, how big it is and how intricate it's going to be. In theory, I could finish one within a week but it rarely works that way. In reality, there are always so many distractions and I am rarely able to work straight through from beginning to end. As I'm sure it is with most artists, if I'm not feeling well or become distracted, or not focusing on the work at hand, there's no sense in even touching the clay because my disposition tends to be reflected in the sculpture. Ultimately I may end up with a piece that I'm not happy with and will decide to scrap it and start over. I also like to work for a while and then stop, step away from the piece so I can scrutinize the work I've already done. This may go on for days so I can determine what's right with the piece and more importantly what's wrong so it can be corrected. I don't know if I'm ever completely happy with a sculpture, but I guess at some point you have to declare it finished and move on to something else."

Do you mind if I ask you about your handicap? How does it affect your sculpting?

"I was injured in a climbing accident in 1994 that left me with a broken back and paralyzed from the waist down. I've been confined to a wheelchair ever since. Simply put, "it sucks!" But what can you do? I guess you never really accept something like that, but you have to deal with it. For the most part I don't let it get in the way of my sculpting, although I doubt I'll be tackling a life-size T-rex anytime soon. If anything, it makes it more difficult to travel and I'm more reluctant to want to visit distant modeling shows or museums."

When I've fooled around with sculpting, there's so much excess sculpey coming out of the grooves I cut. Should I sculpt through clear plastic as others have told me?

"You must be referring to the little grooves you make when doing detailed texture work. I've heard of sculptors using the plastic wrap technique but personally have never used it. The trick is to make a gentle impression in the clay rather than gouging it like you would if raking or plowing a field. It's tedious work but you don't end up with all the little "Sculpey boogers," so to speak. What few you do end up



with can usually be brushed away with a paintbrush by whisking in the direction your texture flows. After that, brushing on a light coat of rubbing alcohol will usually dissolve the rest. And finally, after baking the sculpey, lightly go over the finished sculpture with a real fine steel wool to remove any leftover imperfections."

What do you think it is about prehistoric animals that makes so many of us fascinated by them?

"I would have to say it's simply our curiosity of the unknown. Everybody loves a good mystery and for the most part that's what prehistoric animals are, mysterious. It's more so with the dinosaurs than the mammals. Dinosaurs exist just outside our reality. Sure we know they existed; we know their skeletal anatomy and larger than life-size, but almost everything else is unknown and based on speculation derived from fossil evidence. This unknown is what fuels our thoughts and drives paleontologists and paleo-artists to continue to change and amend their theories and depictions. With the exception of birds (and some paleontologists will argue that), dinosaurs have no living counterparts. With mammals, many of the extinct species have descendants from their family tree existing today. By studying their modern relatives we're able to gain unique insight into the lives and behaviors of extinct mammals that simply can't be achieved with dinosaurs."

Who are your heroes and do you have any words of wisdom for prehistoric animal sculptor wannabees out there?

"It's very difficult to make a list of 'heroes.' So many artists and non-artists alike in a wide variety of fields, everything from the classic world of painting and sculpture to the more modern medias of wildlife photography, movies and comic books, have influenced me. There are so many talented artists that I admire and I wouldn't want to exclude any of them. I find something positive and inspiring in every sculpture, painting or illustration that I view, whether it was done by an amateur or a well-known professional. Of course the list could never be complete without mentioning the famous artist Charles Knight. More recently I really admire the illustrations of Mark Hallett, Mauricio Anton and the fantastical dinosaurs of James Gurney. I really like the prehistoric sculptures of David Krentz and Shane Foulkes, and the comic book styling of Wendi Pini and Ricardo Delgado to name a few. I'm also a big fan of figure modeler Randy Bowen. I follow the work of many paleontologists such as Paul Sereno, Robert Baker and Jack Horner. Almost everyone would agree that the classic cinema works of Ray Harryhausen and Willis O'Brien have influenced us on some level, not to mention the more modern visions of George Lucas, James Cameron, and Steven Spielberg. Also, I'm such a big fan of the cinema effects industry; Stan Winston and Phil Tippett are just a couple names that come to mind. From the classical world, I can't forget Leonardo and Michelangelo, and I'm not talking about the Ninja Turtles. There are so many wonderful people, I could easily fill two pages."

"If I were to give any words of wisdom to upcoming paleoartists, it would be to be as well-rounded and versatile as you possibly can. Pursue paleo subjects, but at the same time don't neglect other genres; being good in one will carry over into the other. Read a lot of books, subscribe to periodicals like National Geographic and other literature that provide current and accurate information on new finds, theories and discoveries. Study the anatomy of wildlife through photography as well as through live subjects even if it just means sculpting or drawing your pets. Get involved with zoos, conservation programs or other wildlife-based organizations so you can become familiar with how animals interact with their environment, amongst

themselves and with other species. The paleoart that I tend to like the most are the sculpture, paintings and illustrations that depict dinosaurs and other prehistoric animals in ways they may have appeared and acted within their habitat; the ones that give you a real vision of a working ecosystem. Explore new areas, or those less frequented. Draw a lot; I can't stress that enough. Fill as many sketchbooks as you can with designs, ideas and renderings. When starting a new project I sometimes find myself referring back to drawings I did years ago. And finally, be persistent and promote your work; never be completely satisfied with your abilities and learn from your critics."

What's coming next from Sean Cooper?

"That's hard to say, I'm always on the lookout for worthwhile projects. As mentioned earlier, I have a couple new paleo-models in the works that will be available soon. I also plan to continue adding to my prehistoric mammal series and eventually add dinosaurs and other prehistoric creatures into the mix. I'll continue to sculpt commissioned pieces for individual paleo enthusiasts and for museum displays alike. For those who have visited my website and have seen my Paleo/Sci-fi creations I call MECHANOSAURS (which are basically mechanical looking dinosaurs as the name suggests), I have a raptor version currently at the moldmakers which should be available soon. I've received numerous emails and letters requesting them, so I figured I should get busy and produce one in model form. Ultimately I'd like to do some more mainstream projects, maybe work with a manufacturer to produce more widely distributed stuff, items for zoo and museum gift shops for example, as well as toy and model stores. I always keep an open mind and don't rule out anything."



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A Look At...

THE SECRET WORLD OF

007™



...and Other Famous Spies

by Fred DeRuvo

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James Bond, the Secret World of 007, by Alastair Dougall is published by
Dorling-Kindersley (www.dk.com) ISBN#0-7894-6691-0 SRP \$19.95/USA

What would our world be without our spies? Love 'em, hate 'em, be intrigued by 'em, but we can't do without them.

Slight of Hand

I'm sure we all have our favorite spy and for most of us, it's probably Bond...James Bond. While he may be the most well-known and most celebrated spy, we all know he's by no means the only one. Over the years we've been introduced to the exploits of spies on the big screen, the small screen, in books and even in comic books. In fact, we're all aware that many comic book superheroes often

incorporate the spy motif within their persona. They all lead double lives to some degree or another, masking their true identity from the world at large.

In this article, we're going to take a look not only at Bond, but also at some of the other spies that we're all familiar with, some of which even became models for us!

Specifically, I've got a book (left) that I'm going to bring to your attention as well as highlight some of the models that

have been out and about for quite some time and a few that have just reentered the modeling atmosphere. So, hold onto your top hat, kiss your favorite girl good-bye, strap on your rocket pack and let's shoot for the moon!

It All Began...

Roughly 36 years ago, the most well known spy of all time, James Bond, went from the pages of Ian Fleming's books to the big screen and he hasn't stopped for a moment since then to even catch his breath.

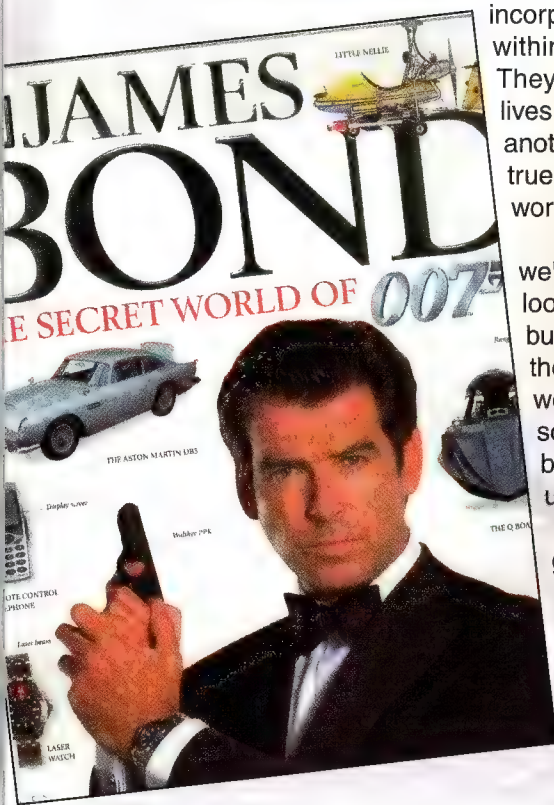
Even though five different actors have played the world's most famous spy, there is still an unquenched thirst for more of Bond and his adventures. Most of us undoubtedly have our favorite Bond as well; one that truly lives up to our ideal of a ruddy, self-contained man, who always outwits his opponent through sheer force, brains or a combination of both. He remains calm and steady under pressure where most other men would easily falter. He even manages to find time during his escapades to flirt with the woman of the moment. All in all, Bond is THE man for the hour, the season and the mission.

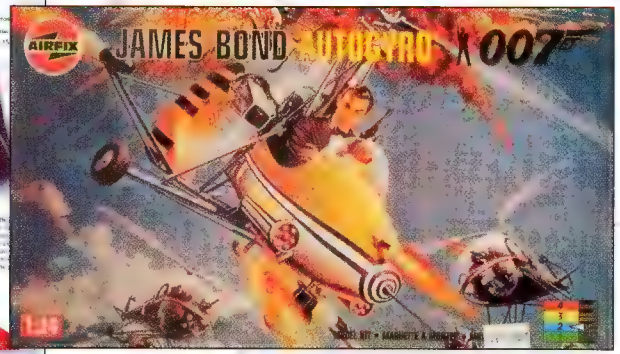
To date, there have been 19 successful Bond films (not counting Sean Connery's reprised Bond role in "Never Say Never Again," with the 20th now in production, (which was short on gadgets and action and long on dialogue). One has to wonder how such a creation can continue unabated and with such success.

Gadget Man

The spy is the true Gadget Man. He has everything at his disposal that he could ever need for any mission he ever finds himself involved in. Irrespective of the need, Bond's faithful "Q" creates everything he needs for just the right time.

One such creation came in handy for one of Bond's





early adventures. Little Nellie, as she was known, was created by Q for low-level aerial reconnaissance. This little autogryo was utilized in Bond's effort to locate Blofeld's lair believed to be hidden deep within a volcano range on a Japanese island. It was well equipped and easily maneuverable, perfect for Bond's needs at the time.

With the exception of the "Never Say Never Again" Bond film, all Bond films, and for that matter, most spy-related films and TV shows, utilize gadgetry to help the mastermind spy accomplish his (or her, in the case of Emma Peel and Girl from UNCLE) intended mission. In fact, it could easily and truthfully be asserted that without these wonderful little gizmos, life for these super crime-fighters would have ended most unceremoniously years before. It's the gadgets that often become the unheralded

Bond's most glorious and sporty "weapon" of choice

would have to be his car. A good spy can't be without one. His most spectacular vehicle is probably known to all of us as the Aston Martin DB5. This particular car came equipped with seat ejector, a bullet-proof plate that rose up out of the rear to protect the occupants, tire slashers (that could extend out of the rear wheel hubs to shred the tires of the enemy's car), radar scanner, machine guns and a host of other useful items perfectly suited for the spy who needs these items in his constant effort to outwit and dethrone the powers of the underworld.

The Model Spy

For the model enthusiast, James Bond really arrived when the Aurora Plastics Corporation produced him as a styrene kit in 1966. Boys everywhere went nuts! We could own James Bond, build and paint him and set him on our very own shelf!

Eventually, one of the more well-known henchman that appeared in Goldfinger also became an injection-molded kit. Oddjob was in scale with Bond, but the only problem was that unlike the two Man from UNCLE kits produced later, these two figures did not have an interlocking or connecting base. They were also both facing the same way, so it was difficult to put them in a scene together.

Open Channel D

Aurora produced other kits based on spies we had come to know and love. Two of the most recognized were the two agents from the television series Man from UNCLE,



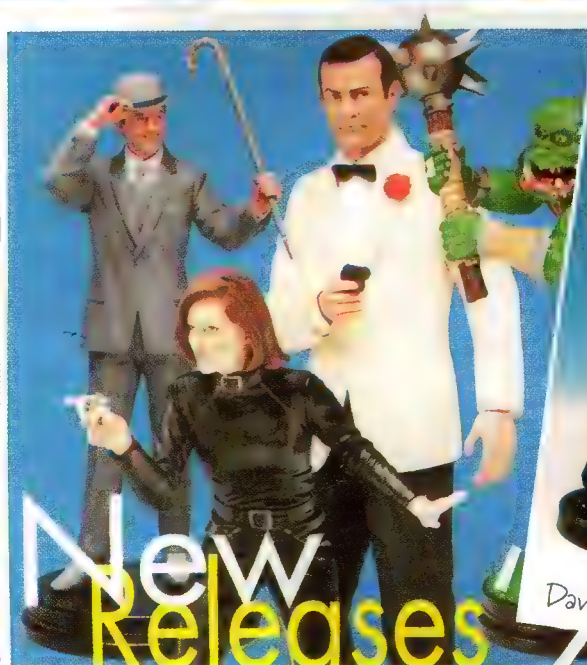
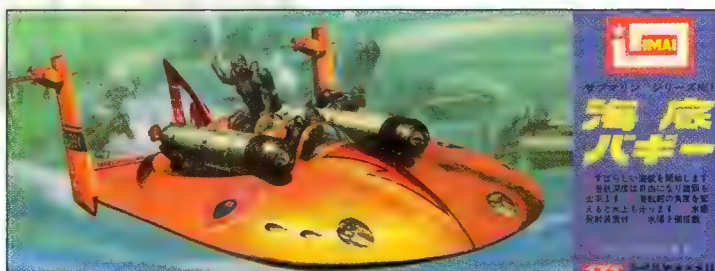
which stood for United Network Command for Law and Enforcement. Napoleon Solo and Illya Kuryakin fought THRUSH every week, right on our own TV screens and, along with Bond, were released by Aurora in 1966. These guys had all the gadgets, the brains, the hidden headquarters and one of them - Solo - usually got the girl each week. What I particularly liked about this show was the fact that there were two agents who worked together. Kuryakin was the brainy, business-like agent, while Solo was more flirtatious with the women, which of course, usually ended up with him getting the girl almost every episode.

As mentioned, these two styrene kits could be interlocked, which created one large diorama of both agents with a wall in the background. Solo was just coming over the top, while Kuryakin was already on the ground. You just had to have both!

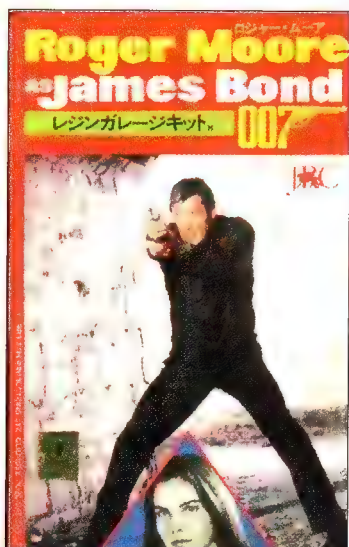
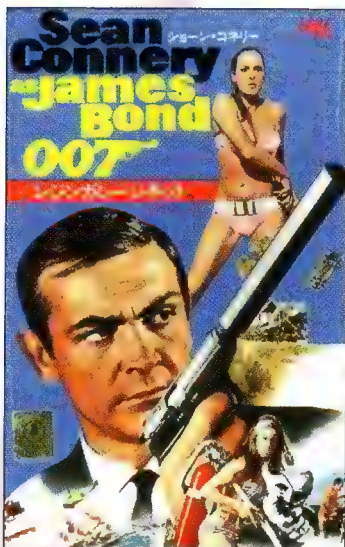
More Spies Like Us

Our look at spies would not be complete if we did not include a number of other well-known Brits who also fought the forces of evil on a weekly basis. Probably without doubt, the most comely spy that ever graced the screen has to be Mrs. Peel. Do I hear an "amen?" Her grace, her curves, her brains, her beauty all worked together to overcome the powers of darkness and brought the average man (or boy) to his knees.

Juniper Trading Company, out of England, produced a very good Mrs. Peel/Diana Rigg resin kit, in 1:6 scale. As seen in the photo, she was



Right: These Canadian issues of Aurora's Man from U.N.C.L.E. kits can be connected to create one larger diorama. **Below:** Two Japanese figure kits of two of the more famous Bond men.



poised with gun at ready. Interestingly enough, I remember her main defensive measure was her high kick! It worked for me!

Juniper also produced a Steed as well as a Bond kit. These were nicely rendered kits of some of the spies whose exploits we followed. Steed was, in my opinion, slightly off in the likeness department, though Bond and Peel were dead on.

Two other figures produced by Juniper were of the X-Files stars, David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson, whose likenesses were fairly close to the actors.

Other Styrene Marvels

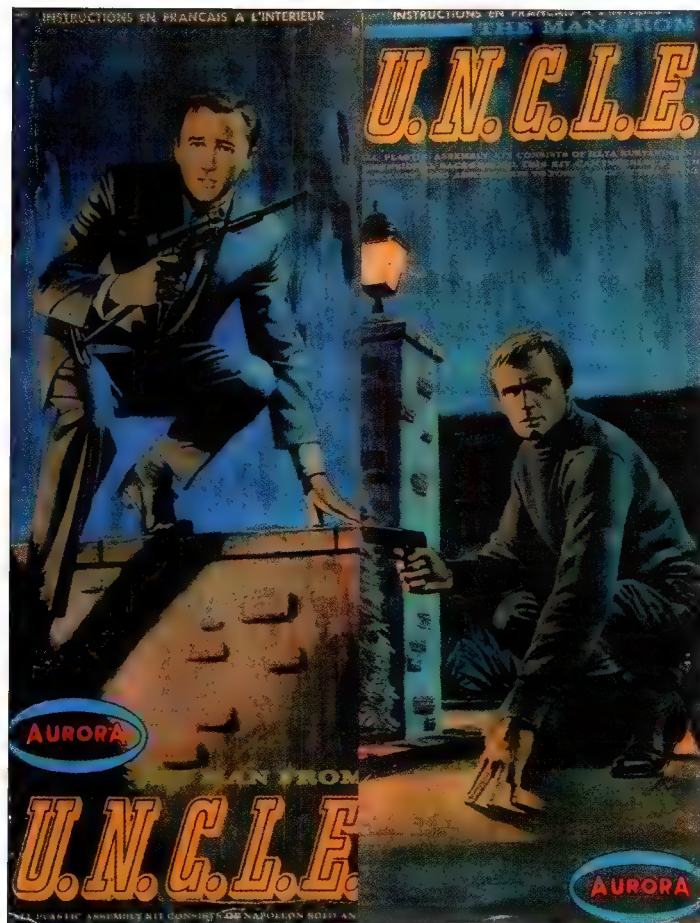
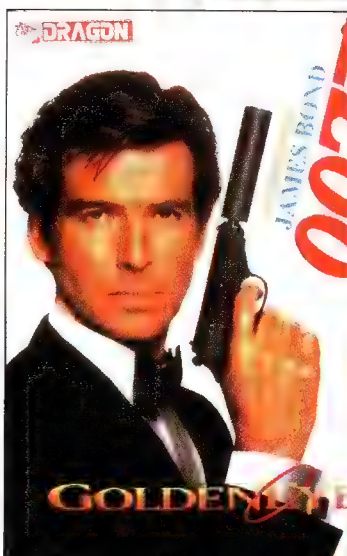
Doyusha, out of Japan, produced a number of models for the Bond enthusiast. Their 1:24 scale Aston Martin DB5 from Goldfinger was highly detailed with quite a few parts and even included the separate figures of Oddjob and Sean Connery as Bond. Likenesses aren't that bad.

Doyusha also produced a 1/288 James Bond Moonraker with Figures model based on the Bond movie, Moonraker, and also included figures of Jaws, his girlfriend in the movie and Roger Moore as Bond.

More to Come?

What would we do without our spies? As modelers, we've been blessed with having a number of high profile styrene and resin kits available to satiate our building and painting appetites.

Can we expect more to come? Who knows? At this point, it doesn't look like there is anything particular on the modeling horizon. That can always change though. As



modelers, we need to keep our eyes peeled and our building and painting abilities sharp so that if and when something does make its approach, we'll be ready.

With more on the way in Bond-related films, there's always the hope and chance that another Bond-related vehicular or figure kit will make its way to store shelves and eventually to our workbench. One can only hope. In the meantime, how do you like your spy kits? Mine? Shaken, not stirred. Looking for some of these OOP kits? Check with Green's Models at:

<http://www.greenmodels.com/>



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with Jim Bertges



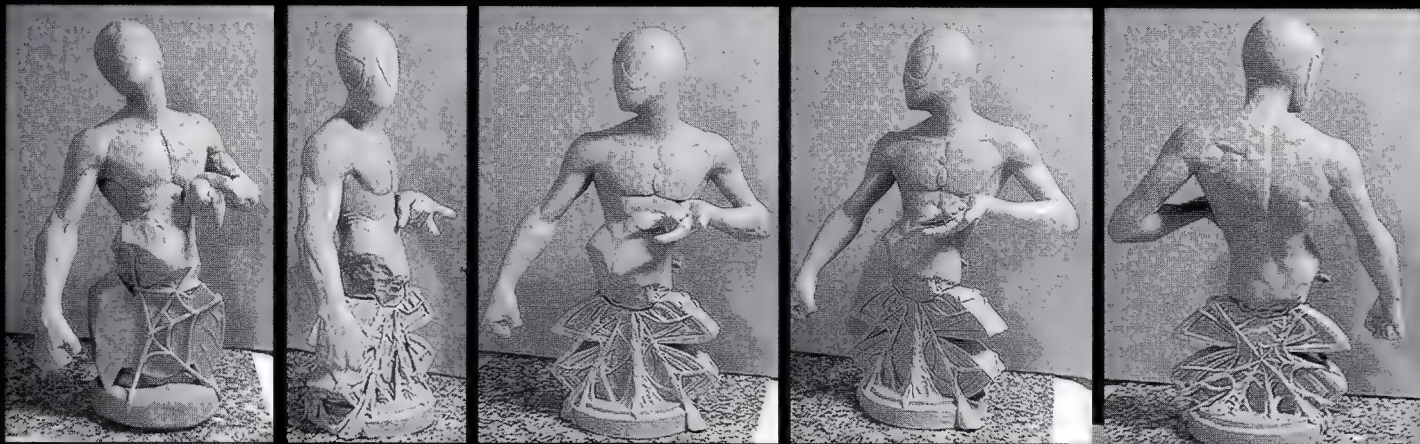
Have you ever walked into your favorite comic shop and just looked over the selection of action figures, pre-painted statues and busts and other assorted comic-related items only to find yourself wondering, like the Joker, "Where do they get all those wonderful toys?" Well, if your shop is like most of the comic shops in the country, the toys come from the same source as the comics on the racks, Diamond Comic Distributors. Diamond is probably the largest distributor of comics, specialty magazines and comic-related items in the United States. They are always on the lookout for new and interesting items that will appeal to the comic book and science fiction fan. Those items are made available to comic shops and individuals through a massive publication called Previews. In recent years Diamond has gone beyond just searching out rare and interesting items for the shops; they have actually gone into the business of creating fascinating gems for collectors through their sister company, Diamond Select.

Eric Lyga, the head of marketing for Diamond Select was kind enough to explain the evolution of Diamond Select and give us some insight as to what they do. "Diamond Select is a sister company to Diamond Comics Distributors. The head honchos at Diamond wanted to create unique new collectibles and instead of finding another company to do it, they decided to create their own so that things can be done the way we want them to. We started off basing all our collectibles on comic book properties and now we've

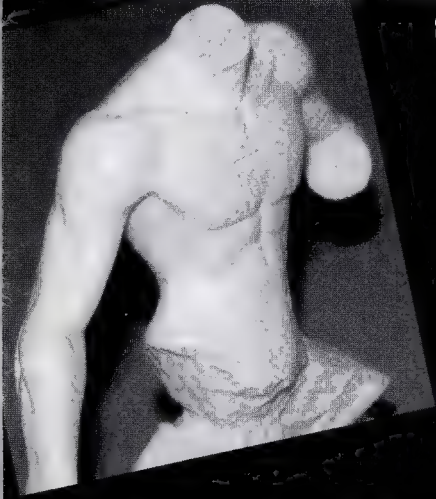
expanded out into more mass market and consumer-friendly properties. Diamond Select started its first product line in 1999 so we're still a relatively young company. And just this year (2001) is when we started expanding into mass marketing with our Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer resin sculpts and our Marvel busts, which are based on more "mass market" type characters like the X-Men and Spiderman who have been featured in movies."

As in any business, decisions have to be made about what Diamond is going to produce and there are many things to take into consideration. Eric explains just who gets to make those decisions and how they approach a particular subject. "We have a production manager named Jason Whitney who oversees everything from a production standpoint and myself as head of marketing. I do the preliminary research on new properties and old properties. We have things like Peter Cottontail, which we did an action figure line on. We found that Easter was the second biggest gift-giving holiday of the year and yet no one had ever created an action figure geared toward that, although there are all sorts of action figures geared toward Christmas. Those kind of factors enter into our determination."

Some of the decisions may seem intuitively simple, but there's a lot to consider when you're making a business decision and often gut instincts play a big part. "In general it's the character's popularity, but there are other factors that come in. When you license a property you have to pay fees to the licensor. If someone has



Spiderman sculpting process and tooling



a character that is low in popularity but is charging an enormous sum for a guarantee, we're not going to go after that because we can't be sure we'll make money on it. That's what business is all about, making money. But we do try to go after some less known properties in order to give them more mass-market appeal. For example, a guy named David Mack has created a comic book called Kabuki which has had absolutely rave reviews from critics and we decided to go after his license to make action figures, replicas and other products because we have faith in the property itself even though it's not necessarily X-Men or Shrek. We think it has a lot of potential."

Diamond Select also gets feedback from retailers in comic shops who have a more direct contact with the fans and their buying habits. "We don't have direct access to the comic shops, but since we sell to Diamond Comic Distributors, we have an indirect access for their input. We get feedback from Diamond's purchasing department telling which items they feel will do well and which won't. We're blessed with that. We have a positive mix because we have the resources of a big company, but we're still a small company. We have open channels of communication and don't have to deal with red tape."

Product created by Diamond Select amounts to only a part of the "toys" that Diamond Comic Distributors carry. However, Diamond Select product is not limited to stores that deal with Diamond Comics either. "Right now we sell not only to Diamond, but our product is carried by stores like Toys R Us, Electronic Boutique, Musicland, Tower Records and other retail

outlets."

The business end is only part of what Diamond Select has to deal with in getting their product to market. They also have to find talented people to hold up the creative end of the business. "We have a lot of different sculptors who like to work with us like Gabriel Marquez, Greg Aronowitz, the Schiflett Brothers, Plan B Toys, David Cortés, Rudy Garcia to name just a few. As to assigning projects, basically we look at each guy's area of expertise and they'll also approach us and say, "Hey, I heard you're working on Battle of the Planets; I'd like to work on that." The Schiflett Brothers are known for being extremely meticulous and having an amazing amount of detail, so we went to them for our Werewolf: The Masquerade line, because there's fur involved and there's detail with the fangs and other things. A sculptor who can sculpt a face can't necessarily sculpt a wolf face. That's the kind of thing that makes them more suited to this line than to something like Rudolph, because that's a pretty simple sculpt. We assigned that to Plan B Toys because we knew they could do everything in house. They do painting as well and we knew they would get it done for us."

Diamond has established relationships with a number of sculptors and artists, but that doesn't mean that they're not looking for new and interesting people to work with. "We have sculptors send stuff to us on a regular basis. These are people who have worked for other companies like the Franklin Mint and Toy Biz. Even some guys just out of school send us their portfolios or pictures of their stuff that they did in art school. We always look at everything they send us. We use a



Storm Being Brought to Life

wide variety of talent. We're just starting our first project with Shawn Nagle, a guy who has been sculpting for over 10 years and who's done a lot of work with Toy Biz. It's very important to look at new (to us) talent. Not only do we find new talent, it also keeps the level of competition up. We know our guys are going to put out the best product if they know they're going to have to compete for their next project."

As Eric said, Diamond is not just looking at established artists. When he was asked how an aspiring sculptor could have work reviewed, he responded readily, "The best way for someone to contact us is just to mail in something. They can e-mail if they want, but we prefer to have something physical we can look at. If they're willing to part with a sculpted piece, they can send it in, but we can't guarantee we'll send it back. Photos will be the best way to show their stuff."

It would stand to reason that since Diamond Select is associated with the nation's largest comic book distributor, they would have a simple time in contacting companies for licenses and making deals, but that is not necessarily always the case. "Depending upon the project, approaching licensors can be simplified by our association with Diamond. Guys who are in the comic business know the name Diamond and they know the quality. We explain that we're a sister company and they know the people at the very top are the same so they can be trusted. It gets us in the door. But at the same time, there are some properties that are outside the industry who aren't affected at all by our association. Because they don't associate Diamond Comic Distributors with anything in their world, we have to compete on the same level as anyone else. When we signed licenses with Golden Books Publishing and Good Times Entertainment for Peter Cottontail and Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer, that was straight in on the ground floor. No one was playing favorites."

As they gain momentum in the world of collectibles, Diamond has plans for an interesting line-up of products set for the store shelves. Eric explains about some of the unique and exciting items coming up: "We have a license to do Marilyn Monroe die cast cars based on six of her movies. We're doing Vampire: The Masquerade and Werewolf: The Apocalypse from White Wolf Games as action figures. The Marvel bust program is my favorite of everything that's coming up. It will be an extensive program that will include eight-inch resin statues, bookends, snow globes and several dif-

ferent lines of busts starting with the Ultimate Bust line."

When the talk turns to busts of Marvel Comics characters, one of the first things that springs to mind is the work of Randy Bowen and the large line of Marvel products he's introduced over the years. One might think that the market was already saturated with these popular characters, but Eric illuminated the reasons the new Diamond busts will bring a unique look at the Marvel Heroes. "The market hasn't been overexposed to Marvel products. I think that Bowen has done a wonderful thing in bringing the busts to the market, but what we've done is look at his work and decided to do something different and new. If you look at our busts, they're a completely different design. Bowen's busts are designed off a traditional bust in a traditional pose, being very heroic or demonic depending upon the character. We've decided to make our characters look as though we've taken a picture of them in action and made a three-dimensional sculpt of that. We've done things like make the bases unique to each line and we incorporated the base into the design, instead of it just being a character on a base. What we've done is built on what Bowen has done and taken it to the next level. Rudy Garcia sculpted several pieces for the Ultimate line, so did David Cortés and Sam Greenwell."

Diamond is doing well with product currently in the market and they expect that this is only the beginning, "We currently have a line out that is based on Chaos! Comics. It includes Lady Death, VMandala and a Lucifer bust that's gotten a lot of good reviews. They're selling pretty well for the property. Chaos! Comics is a pretty focused property; we're not expecting to sell 10,000 pieces. They're selling well, fans like them and they're getting out there. We're expecting good things from the Marvel line. We know that Marvel is more mass market friendly."

One of the things that will help propel Diamond to success is a "more bang for your buck" approach when it comes to their product. Pricing is always a concern to collectors and Eric promises they will get their money's worth. "Our prices will be in the same price range (as Bowen's), but if you look at our Ultimate line, our busts are decidedly bigger than those of Bowen's other companies. Our first bust, Storm, stands over seven inches tall and its retail price will be between \$45 and \$50. It's reasonable for what you're getting."

As a modeling magazine we would be remiss in our

duty to our readers if we didn't ask Diamond about any plans to produce model kits as well as pre-painted statues and busts. To someone unfamiliar with the complexities of licensing and its legalities, it would seem like a simple idea to add a few hundred extra busts or statues to a production run and sell them unpainted and unassembled as kits, but as Eric explained, several things stand in the way of that simple idea. "First there's the legal issue. Licensing can be pretty strict and our product is licensed as resin busts, completed, painted resin busts. That's the only way we can produce them. The other part is that when we cast these pieces in China, the mold is a one-piece mold. So we don't put them together and paint them. They are cast out of one block of resin silicone, then painted and shipped. I've been told that the only way they are cast as more than one piece is if they are shipped as more than one piece.

"There are two things that would have to happen for us to produce these pieces as kits. First there would have to be a different sculpt. A company like Marvel isn't going to want a professionally painted red and blue Spiderman and then have a Spiderman next to it that some guy decided to paint orange. I'm not saying that modelers who are wonderful painters won't do a better job than the mass produced paint job, but then you're going to have some guy, somewhere who will want to paint Spiderman orange. I don't think that Marvel will necessarily want that sitting next to our product that will be of our standard quality. I think it would have to be a different mold and a different piece. And the second part would be the level of demand and interest. If we felt there was enough interest out there, if people were e-mailing us and talking about model kits on web sites, that might be something we would consider adding to our license at a later date. I don't know if Marvel has another company they would get to do model kits."

So they are not ruling out model kits, but as in any business, there has to be a prospect of making a profit from any product they produce. It would really be up to model builders everywhere to contact the producers of pre-painted busts and statues to demonstrate that there is a groundswell of interest in obtaining model kits of the characters they produce and that modelers make up enough of an audience to make such a venture profitable.

As we all do, the folks at Diamond Select have dream projects they'd like to work on as they look toward the future. "Our dream projects are products that are nostalgic that are making a comeback. Things like the Transformers busts are coming out; Transformers are making a huge comeback. The whole He-Man launch from Mattel, some of those properties. We have a soft spot for those 80s products. I think all of us who grew up in the 70s and 80s have a soft spot for them. That's why we went after Battle of the Planets; we're all really excited about that. If there's anything big we'd like to do it, but we know we're not at that level yet. The big names are going to go to Hasbro and Mattel. But then, if you look at some of our stuff, even though they aren't based on properties with mass appeal, the quality is better. The figures from our first action figure line from Dark Alliance are just incredible, the sculpts, the detail and yet they're still wonderfully

articulated. I think you lose some of that when you get to the level that Hasbro and Mattel have. They can price their action figures to be disposable because they sell a hundred thousand of them. But the way we price them, people aren't going to play with them in the sand. We know that; it creates a kind of love-hate relationship."

Another relationship Diamond must be concerned with is the one they have with their competitors. To be able to compete in the collectible business a manufacturer has to keep a watch on everyone after a piece of their market. "We keep a close eye on all of our competitors to see how they're growing and innovating. We look at their product and try to form as objective an opinion as possible about it. Of course, our gut instinct is to say, 'Well our stuff is better!' But we have to be realistic as well. We look at our stuff as realistically as possible and see, well we made a mistake there, how do we prevent that from happening again. And we see the good things other companies do as well. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery and when we see folks like Moore or Bowen do something we think is groundbreaking or exceptional, we admire it and try to figure out how it will help improve our product."

In the long run, Diamond Select plans to continue to delight collectors and toy lovers everywhere with unique and desirable product they won't be able to find anywhere else. Keep an eye open the next time you visit your comic shop or toy store, there might be something on the shelf from Diamond that you never knew you couldn't live without.



Remember to check the label on the outside of the envelope that this issue arrived in, if you're a subscriber. You could be up for renewal and you don't want to miss out on any issue of MR!

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Buck Rogers in the 25th Century **STARFIGHTER**

Continued from Page 43

form sheet, as shown. It is then glued (in two pieces) with clear 5 min. epoxy to the already primed and painted inside upper panel of the cockpit cover.

Once this is done, the finished canopy had to be carefully masked to prepare it for the outer main body painting. The whole assembly should be prepainted the main body color. Unlike the instructions, the colors used here were 75% Model Master's Light Ivory to 25% Model Master's Warm Camouflage Gray. These colors matched the hero shots more accurately. The old Monogram kit called for white with a hit of gray, which lacked much of the warmth needed.

After the main cockpit has dried, and the cockpit cover has been installed, the lower edge seam was filled with putty and allowed to dry thoroughly. The entire miniature was then given the base coat.

The twin-engine parts are nicely marked on their respective backsides with a diamond and a square, which correspond to matching holes in the backside of the main body. It was recommended to me that brass pins should be installed into the length of the resin engines, so that they will hold well into the main body when glued with cyanoacrylate.

The painting of the engines was done prior to mounting them and hedge on being a cool slate blue-gray (more gray than blue). Model Master's Jet Exhaust was used to feather the coloration from the rear vents on the engines to about the midway point back along the taper of the engine cones. The rear of the engine (spikes) is a metallic gold color.

One of the most impressive accessories with this kit is not only the very detailed painting maps (3 color photos and instructions), but also the carefully researched and very crisp water slide decals.

There is extensive information to guide the modeler around the cockpit to mount all the proper tiny detail decals correctly.

The main side emblem fits perfectly into the middle section of the side most panels.

The rainbow decal was another interesting variation of what the original Monogram kit offered, that being 6 colors instead of 5! This decal had to be placed rather carefully to ensure a proper fit and placement.

A graphite pencil can be used to draw lines where you don't want to paint, like around the guns.

As a final precaution, the entire miniature was given several applications of DullCote™. This helps to keep the decals sealed against the paint.

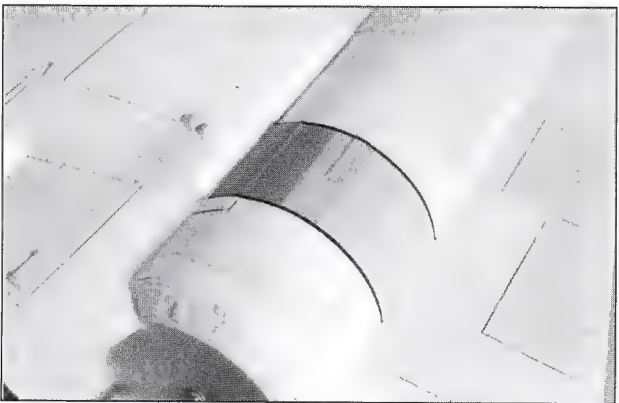
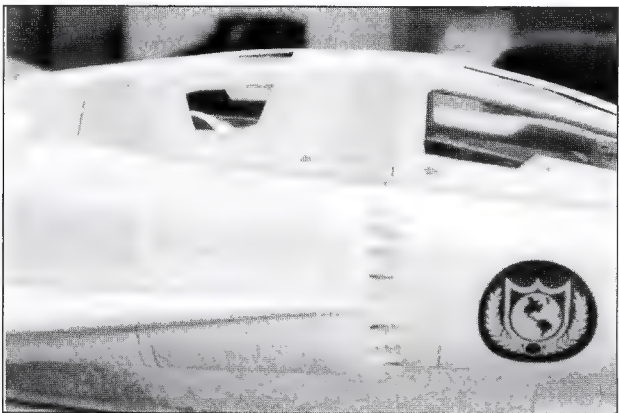
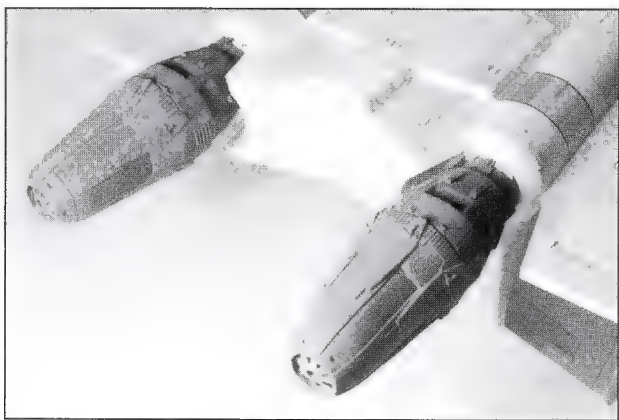
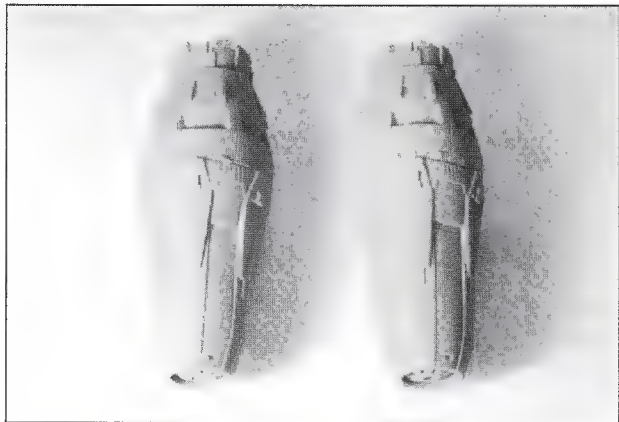
Overall, this was a fun miniature to build. I feel that one of the most important parts of building this Starfighter is the leveling of the winglets and the care with the waterslide decals. I find that on most ships it will always come down to careful measuring and patience. I feel that this Starfighter is about as accurate as you can get. When you compare it to the official studio pictures, it's pretty accurate.

Oh, if only the Buck Rogers pilot were available, he'd have been a great addition to the interior. That's all, B-duh-buduh-Buck!

Interview with Jim Key, Custom Replicas:
www.customreplicas.com

KG: Jim, when you built the miniature of the "Thunderfighter" for Jeremy Shaffer, what did you do differently in super-building it?

Jim: The miniature for Jeremy Shaffer was done last spring



Buck Rogers in the 25th Century STARFIGHTER

around April/May. It was straight out of the box, and was mostly a matter of matching the paint job to all the reference material we could find, which isn't much. I remember Jeremy asking about a custom stand that we gave him some ideas on, but in the end he decided to create his own out of clear and black acrylic. The design is reminiscent of the launch rail ideas for the Battlestar Galactica Viper, though uniquely different.

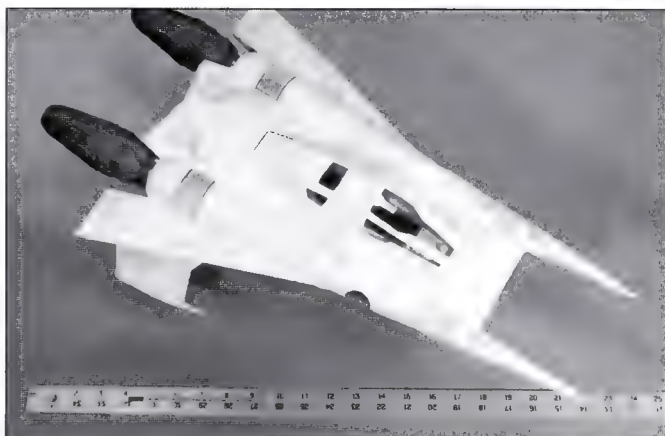
KG: What tips would you like to pass along to the readers?

Jim: Carefully study the painting maps that come with this kit. It was also supplied with 3 gorgeous full color photos, which revealed a lot. We were surprised to find out that the body color was in fact a light ivory with varying degrees of lighter, darker matching tones and gray compliments. We strengthened the engine pods to the body by adding brass pins, even though it wasn't called for.

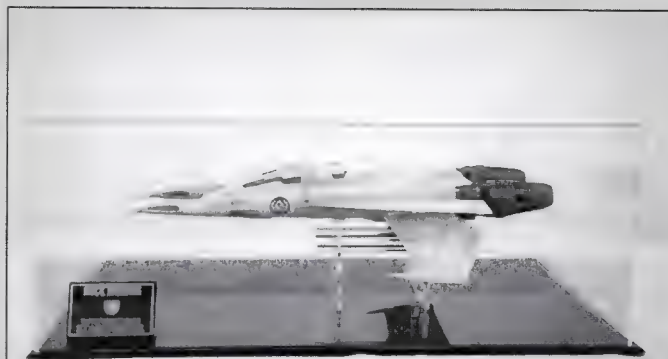
KG: Yes, it was you who gave me the tip of using the brass pins on the engine pods.

Jim: Lastly, take your time with the decals; they are thin and once applied, they need to be sealed immediately with a dull coat or suitable decal sealant.

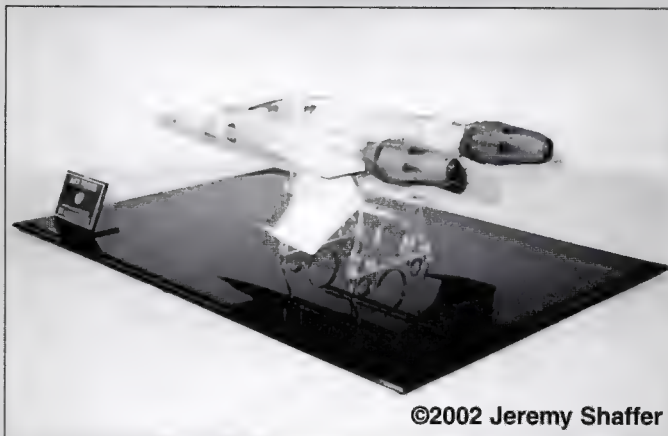
KG: Thank you for your time, Jim. I look forward to reading about your upcoming projects!



A Real Collectible



©2002 Jeremy Shaffer



©2002 Jeremy Shaffer

Custom Replicas was kind enough to offer these pictures, as well as the picture on page one, of a buildup they did over a year ago for Mr. Jeremy Shaffer, who helped in the process of designing his own acrylic and wooden stand. The twin acrylic support pylons are connected via two horizontal acrylic linking cylinders. These in turn join in with the twin upright support pylons, which cradle the belly of the "Thunderfighter" as it is also known. The entire acrylic assembly is laminated to a finely stained wooden display base.

Below left and right:
Kit Girl's finished Starfighter



Hobby Industry Association Trade Show

January 27, 2002

Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, CA

The Hobby Industry Association Trade Show (or HIA as it is known among those in the inner circle) is a show that I had never attended but had heard a good deal about. In talking with a number of companies we deal with who produce products for the craft/hobby industry and who were planning on exhibiting, I felt since the emphasis of the show was more toward the craft side of the hobby, I needed to seriously check it out. When you consider that much of the emphasis in *Modeler's Resource* in one way or another is on creating intricate dioramas for models, the show was begging me to stop in and see what I could see because of the potential promise of additions to my hobby arsenal, specifically in the diorama and aftermarket arena.

I booked my flight through to Burbank, CA from Sacramento and headed down to Anaheim on Sunday, January 27th. The plan was to meet up with one of my stalwart and faithful regular writers, Jim Bertges and his lovely wife, Rhona, who graciously offered to pick me up at the airport, attend the show with me (it's always great to have another photographer and his assistant on hand who can also provide a different perspective), and then bring me back to the airport the same day for my return flight to the paradise of Sacramento and surrounding area.

The HIA Internet site highlighted a very detailed show, complete with seminars, exhibitor list along with days and hours. From the way it looked on the Internet, the show might prove to be another one of those "wear comfortable hiking shoes and bring a compass and flare gun" event, but unlike the GenCon gaming event we highlighted a few issues back, I was ready. My wife and I had recently worked our way up to jogging two and a half miles three to four times each week! It was important for me to maintain my "girlish" figure. Besides, the view of my wife's well-toned backside as I huffed and puffed behind her was



The folks from FM Dynasty brush with MR publisher





Celluclay Sculptor, Victoria Kerr



Greenworks' 3-D paper light Dino kits!

a view that just could not be beat on this planet!

Anyway, the trip to the airport and through the check-in line was completely uneventful, as was the flight. With all the additional safety features in place, I was expecting a long, frustrating wait and possible body cavity examination (that is much better left to the fully trained and qualified folks in the medical profession as opposed to those whose education is less than stellar and who would undoubtedly have a difficult time discerning the difference between underwear and plastique through an X-ray machine), but none of that happened. You could easily tell that security was heightened (I think it may have been the presence of the National Guard along with their fully loaded, fully functional, two hundred-thirty shot, carbine-action anti-tank weaponry complete with compass in the stock), which I'm glad of quite frankly, but movement through to my gate was smooth and quick. Not a thing to complain about. It makes me feel better about our upcoming vacation out of state later this August! I will be willing to take my family and fly the tense-but-still-friendly skies one mo' time.

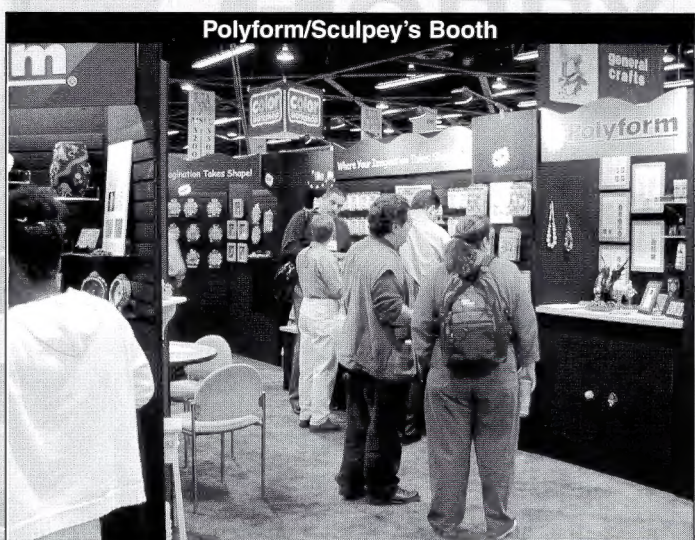
Flying into Burbank is always cool because it's

a nice, small airport. LAX, on the other hand is so large, it's easy to get lost and if you do find your way, you're just as likely to get caught up in a huge traffic jam trying to get out of the airport.

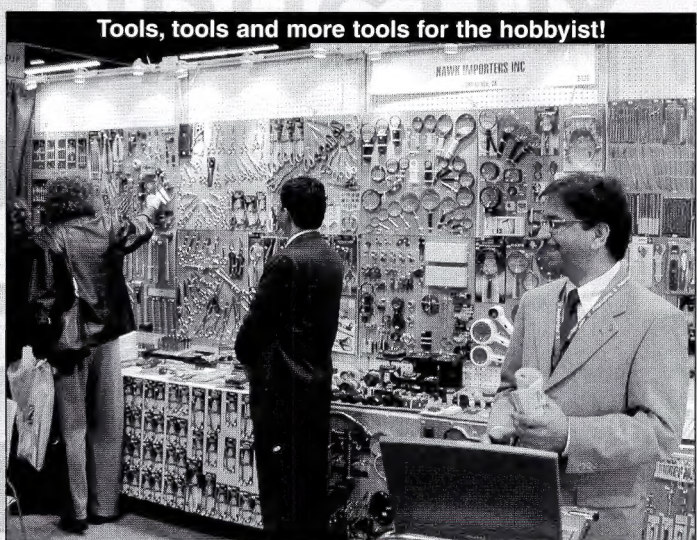
The show was just as I expected! It was very large scale - no make that VERY large scale - and there were hobby-related craft items from one end of the four HUGE rooms to the other.

One thing I learned a long time ago is that if you, as a hobbyist, simply wait for a company to produce what you want, it may never happen and you are at the mercy of the company. If you learn to adapt, create, convert and rework, you have made the hobby yours and you are at no one's mercy. You are the king and it's good to be king! I think this is the biggest reason I like combining crafts with modeling. Mike and Cindy Morgan do this well as does Bill Craft, Hilber Graf, Jim Bertges, Norm Piatt and others. They are not simply relegated to having to use what's out there. What's out there often becomes their starting point for an expansive and ever-increasing hobby.

This is why I will never understand why modelers can often be so shortsighted or narrow



Polyform/Sculpey's Booth



Tools, tools and more tools for the hobbyist!



about their modeling. It's fine to have a favorite genre of models that you enjoy building, but to discount other genres simply because you do not personally involve yourself with them is cutting your nose off to spite your face. Can you imagine if modelers of every area got together with one voice and supported each other as hobbyists for

the sole sake of modeling? Instead, we have people who section themselves off into different areas of modeling and it seems as if never the two shall meet. A sad situation indeed. Don't get me started.

Here's my challenge to you: next time you go to your favorite craft-type store, just wander the aisles and ask yourself when you see different items, "What can I do with that where my modeling is concerned?"

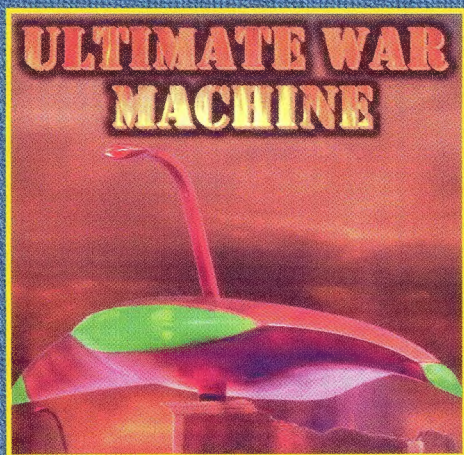
Well, we came, we saw, we conquered. We talked with folks from Rustoleum, FM Dynasty Brush, the Sculpey people and many other companies while at the show! We left with a ton of informative brochures and we hope to highlight some interesting and valuable product for you in the next couple of issues, but in the meantime, feel free to browse our picture gallery that showcases just a smidgen of what we saw at HIA.

<http://www.hobby.org/>



Got Hiking Shoes?





Inside the Next...

MODELER'S RESOURCE

Blue Bug of Justice...

Norm "Kitman" Piatt is at it again, this time creating a Tick diorama, converted from another figure!

The Ultimate War Machine...

Step back into the past as Dave Bengel brings the War Machine into the present! One of "B" movie greatest Sci-Fi hits!

Glue Queen's Krafty Korner...

The Glue Queen (and her King!) are back and they've got one gorgeous Elvira diorama to tell you about!

Lair of the Craftbeast...

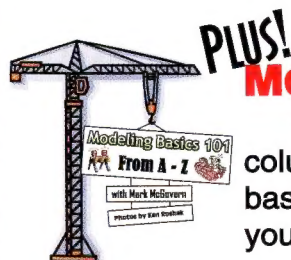
Get out of the water! Bill shines the modeling spotlight on "The Men of JAWS;" three 1/4 scale busts of Quint, Brody and Hooper!

Airbrush Techniques

Ver Curtiss is back with more basic-to-advanced air-brushing techniques for you.

66" Enterprise!

Jim Key is back with a HUGE Enterprise for you!



Modeling Basics 101!

Mark McGovern is heading up a new column for those who want and need the basics for plastic modeling! Do we listen to you, or what?

All this and more (final contents may differ) in Issue #47...
shipping the first week of July 2002!

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